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A  
DAY-DREAMER'S  
HARVEST



BY  
HENRY BYRON



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Book B8

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A DAY-DREAMER'S HARVEST



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HARVEST

BEING MEDITATIONS  
BY HENRY BYRON

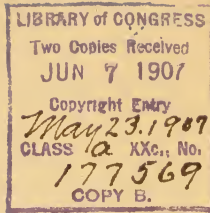
The LORD giveth to His belovèd dreamless nights  
and dreamful days



NEW YORK  
MORGAN SHEPARD CO.  
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TO

J. GEORGE FLAMMER

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

AS A MARK OF FRIENDSHIP AND ESTEEM

BY THE AUTHOR



## FOREWORD

**H**AVING reached life's autumn, I looked about for the harvest. I gathered the fruit of all my days on earth; but when I began winnowing it, lo! the most was scattered like chaff, and only a few grains remained that might be garnered in humanity's storehouse for the mind.





## MEDITATIONS

**T**O be capable of the highest enjoyment of life, our mind must be strong, our heart good, our imagination vivid; we must be, in some measure, philosopher, philanthropist, and poet combined.

...

**A**MUSEMENT should fill only the recess hour of the school of life.

...

**W**HAT a man's amusements are gives a good clew to the kind of man he is.

...

**M**ISTAKE not for pleasure all that goes by that name: most coins in circulation bearing that stamp are counterfeit.

...

**T**HE task of our life is like the task of the vestals: to keep burning the holy fire, the divine flame within us.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**Y**OU will enhance life's relish by seasoning useful activity with cheerful diversion, and earnest thinking with sweet dreaming.

• • •

**M**AR not the pure joys of life by overfastidiousness. The clearest water may disgust us if we examine it through a microscope.

• • •

**T**HE cemetery, the city with the silent streets, where people are all the time seen moving in, but never moving out; where the inhabitants are housed in the narrowest dwellings which they never leave; are surrounded with monuments, trees, and flowers at which they never look; where visitors always find the people at home and never see them, stop at the door and never enter the house, are never welcomed and yet come again, are never met with unkindness and yet are often seen to weep; where above-ground riches and vanity try to make distinctions between man and man, while strict equality reigns within the houses underground.

• • •

**L**IFE'S currents keep flowing into the sea of death and are renewed by inexhaustible springs. The present is swallowed up by the past and re-born out of the womb of the future. We lose those that have given us life, and a new generation grows

## MEDITATIONS

up around us. Death is ruthlessly reaping and life is lustily sprouting simultaneously. We return from the burial of our parent and, with tears in our eyes, rock our shouting child on our knees. We receive at the same time invitations to a funeral and to a wedding, and a call is often made upon our bleeding hearts to participate in joy.

· · ·

**M**AKE not of religion a mixture of folly and selfishness. Think not it consists in belief. There is no merit in believing. Believing in things because you would like them to be true is a triumph of egotism over reason and is not creditable, but derogatory to human nature. Rely not on what others are supposed to have done for you: such a supposition is another instance of the triumph of selfishness over logic—for it is entirely unreasonable, though exceedingly convenient, to assume that what you are to do for yourself has been done for you by another. Imagine not that being religious means driving a bargain with the Lord: giving very little and getting very much; performing some ceremonies that require no sacrifice and receiving eternal life for it.

· · ·

**R**ELIGION, when most degenerated, wages war with knowledge and reason—as if the Omniscient and All-wise favored ignorance and folly!

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**N broad daylight appear no ghosts; in the light of knowledge superstition and fanaticism dare not show themselves.

..

**A**S long as the Jews renounce not their race, they will not find the recognition they deserve—for whoever keeps aloof from the rest will, in a rude state of society, meet with ill-treatment, and, in the most civilized, only find toleration.

..

**C**RUEL fate of the Jews! They had a country and they lost it; they gave the Bible to the world and the world proved anything but grateful to them for it; their civilization is incomparably older than that of any modern nation, and they are treated with contempt by them all. While their monotheism and their ethics are the corner-stone of modern civilization; while some of their race are worshipped; while their literature is declared to be inspired and their history sacred; while their forefathers are reverently called patriarchs, and their eloquent patriots—prophets; while their Psalms are sung in every church and their writings quoted as a text for every sermon, nay, engraven on the very tombstones as the last consolation and hope—they have been for centuries and centuries persecuted, tortured, and killed, and millions of them are still denied human rights. Worst of all: they themselves understand not their own condition. They act not

## M E D I T A T I O N S

with the dignity becoming a people who had stood highest among nations by their ideals and whose humiliations through centuries have been owing to mere brutal force.

. . .

**N**OT the fastening of holy verses to head and arm, gate and door, is of importance, but the idea symbolically expressed by it: to be mindful of the word of God in thought and deed, when coming in and when going out.

. . .

**A**LL meat and drink are clean, if honestly earned and moderately enjoyed.

. . .

**F**RINGES in the border of a garment, a full beard, an incision in the flesh—may *mark* a people, but cannot *distinguish* it.

. . .

**G**OD, the ideal of perfection, is the only true God. Worshipping anything that diverts us from the road leading toward perfection is idolatry. The people at large will always be worshippers of idols: of riches, titles, position, power, vanity, sensuality—and only very few will be found in each generation who serve the Lord. The conception of the ideal of perfection: “Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your

## MEDITATIONS

God am holy," was *long* confined to a very *small* people; living up to that ideal will *always* be confined to a very *few* people.

. . .

WHEN sustaining a great loss, and depression is assailing you, take a deep breath, stretch your arms, walk a few steps, look at the beautiful world, and say to yourself: "I live, I breathe; there is strength in my arms; my feet can carry me; my eyes can bathe in the sweet sunlight. How can I, the possessor of the greatest treasures on earth, be bowed down by any external loss?"

. . .

AS the contrary winds ripple the surface of the river but cannot change its course, so the storms of adversity may harass the good and brave, but cannot make them swerve from the right path.

. . .

DOING good ought to do *us* good; to be just and generous ought to be as natural to us as breathing, the condition of our well-being. If we do good expecting a reward from Heaven and thankfulness from men, our moral views are those of children who behave well looking forward to presents.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**N the book of God where our deeds are recorded the balance is often in favor of those who are seemingly not good, and not at all in favor of those who are apparently much better.

· · ·

**M**ORALITY teaches us to lead a pure and good life; religion does the same and more: it inspires us with love, with enthusiasm for purity and goodness. Morality appeals to reason; religion does the same and more: it appeals also to the heart. Morality deals with life and our relation to our fellow-men; religion does the same and more: it considers eternity and our relation to God as well. Religion imparts to morality fervor, imaginativeness, elevation. *Religion is the poetry of ethics.*

· · ·

**F**ANATICISM sees in art only frivolity and sensuality; in science only human presumption against the Deity; in joy, amusement, and play only worldliness and sinfulness. It comprehends not that the principal impulse to art is enthusiasm for the beautiful in God's creation; that science contradicts not God's wonders, but reveals them all the more; that cheerfulness, the offspring of a sound mind in a sound body, cannot but please God; that art, science, and enjoyment of life are not against religion, but in perfect harmony with it.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**F**ORMAL praying at a certain hour and in a certain place is like the regular morning and evening kiss a child gives its father. The prayer which, independent of time and place, springs from our grateful heart, is like a child's fervent embrace when moved by a feeling of love and thankfulness.

· · ·

**D**IFFERENT nations have different laws, but nature has the same code for all; the customs of one country differ from those of another, but human nature is everywhere the same; each religion contains its own dogmas, but reason and conscience teach all men the same doctrine.

· · ·

**S**UICIDE is becoming of more and more frequent occurrence—for faith and hope, abounding in promise and pointing to the future, are losing hold on prosaic and material modern humanity believing only in facts and caring only for the present—and faith and hope have been for ages the soothing balm for the innumerable ills of life.

· · ·

**L**ET not those who lightly walk the earth condemn their fellow-traveller who, weary unto death, throws off the burden of life—for as little as the healthy can enter into the mood of the dying, just as little can they in the full enjoyment of life

## M E D I T A T I O N S

conceive the feelings of those that are weary of it.  
God alone who gives life may judge him who ends it.

· · ·

CEREMONY is, at the best, but the reminder,  
not the fulfilment of our duty.

· · ·

HE who loves mankind and rejoices at all manifestations of man's nobler nature will consider with reverence all religious ceremonies embodying higher ideas, whether they are the ceremonies of his own church or those of another.

· · ·

RELIGIOUS ceremonies embodying high ideas  
are *enacted* poetry.

· · ·

A RELIGIOUS ceremony may continue for a while after the idea it embodied has left it. Its soul has departed; but the people know it not, and the body is not laid in the grave.

· · ·

LAWS, customs, doctrines that have lost all meaning by entirely altered conditions cannot continue long. When the leaves are withered, they

## M E D I T A T I O N S

may still cling to the tree for a little while; but the wind which will blow them down is sure to come soon.

∴

**BY** declaring the unessential part of a religion to be of as great importance as the essential, we expose the whole to the mockery of infidels.

∴

**THE** Old Testament represents all that is left of old Hebrew literature. Its contents are so various and the various matter is so intermixed that ordinary readers will never be able to judge rightly thereof, unless it is sifted for them and divided in sections according to the *subject it treats of*. There would be an historical, a biographical, a legendary, a poetical, a rhetorical, a philosophical, a ritual, an ethical, and a religious section. The reader would then clearly see what the book contains, and find, to his great surprise, what a small part of it treats of religion.

∴

**SO-CALLED** sense of honor, which has sprung up in the soil of paganism, has *self* in view. It values bodily strength, skill, and courage, and demands cancelling an injury received by inflicting a greater. It aims at having the world ruled by the strong. Brotherly love, which has sprung up in the soil of Judaism, has the welfare and feelings of

## M E D I T A T I O N S

others in view. It enjoins kindness, patience, humility, forgiveness, to overcome evil by good. It aims at establishing the reign of righteousness, the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth.

· · ·

**F**OR ages the human mind had been chiefly pondering on metaphysical subjects. As, however, man cannot outstep the limits nature has drawn—his thoughts, trying to encroach on the domain of the preternatural, continually struck against insurmountable barriers and could not proceed. It was only in recent times that man began confining the greatest part of his mental activity to the study of nature, his own province, and his discoveries and inventions in the short time have been wonderful—have changed the face of the earth and revolutionized the entire mode of his life.

· · ·

**B**OOKS are the building-material of a nation's literature. Whatever serves not to enlarge or beautify that national literary structure cannot properly be called a book.

· · ·

**T**HE same relation that an object bears to its distorted shadow on the wall, reality bears to the description given of it by many an author.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**AKE the people as they are. Appreciate and praise what is good in them; pass over what is not. Make no attempt at correcting them by sermonizing. If you are better than they, try to set them an example; if you are not, who made thee a judge over them?

. . .

**I**F we could only be independent of others and free ourselves from our own follies and vices! but our social conditions and our individual frailties and passions make slaves of us all.

. . .

**T**HE Government has to protect us from being wronged by others, but not from being wronged by ourselves. It has to guard our rights, but we must watch over our morals ourselves. Being placed under tutelage makes us puerile, blunts our perception of good and evil, and weakens our moral strength to refuse the evil and choose the good. We see not, then, the ethical laws which the Government wants us to observe; we see only the force the Government exercises over us, and we try to circumvent it. The child is to be taught morality at home and at school, but the adult may be expected to know the laws laid down by nature and the consequences of their being transgressed.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**P**OLITICAL liberty is not of much account if we are economically dependent, and economical independence is not of much account if we are the slaves of our own follies and vices.

. . .

**O**UR claims on ourselves should be very great and those on others very small.

. . .

**O**LD age is more compassionate than youth—for to have lived longer is to have suffered longer, and suffering engenders compassion. Old age is wiser than youth—for there is no better foster-mother for weak human wisdom than experience. Old age is more charitable in its judgment than youth—for having gone through many vicissitudes, we are better able to put ourselves in the place of others. Old age is more disinterested and self-denying than youth—for, having often had to take care of others, it has been confirmed in the virtues of disinterestedness and self-denial by long practice. Old age is more patient and forbearing than youth—for the trials of life make us stronger, as fire hardens clay, and we bear with more resignation the ill-treatment of fate, and with more forgiveness the injustice of men. Old age is less prejudiced and more just in its views than youth—for, as time goes on, the passions that bias our opinions decrease, and our knowledge of men and the world that rectifies our errors increases.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

EACH individual acting for himself alone can do but little; the union of many who, while working for themselves, are, at the same time, working for one another, can achieve the greatest exploits. *On this union civilization is based.* The canoe made of one hollowed-out trunk is emblematic of the primitive condition of man; the ship built of the beams and boards of many trees is emblematic of civilized society.

...

TO be rich in intellect and poor in means; to be most refined and condemned to live among the rude; to have a noble and sensitive nature and be subject to the mean and domineering; to be susceptible of all that is beautiful and constantly surrounded by what is uncouth and ungainly; to have a mind soaring heavenward and be chained down to the earth by every-day cares; to love nature and solitude and have to live amid perpetual noise and turmoil—that is the fate of many a martyr without the glory of martyrdom.

...

WHATEVER our lot, we may fare better; we may fare worse. The consideration that we may fare better precludes idleness—for there is still much left for us to do, to improve our condition; the consideration that we may fare worse precludes discontent—for we have something yet to be thankful for.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**YOUTH** is occupied with itself. It enjoys life so fully and demands from life so much that it is entirely absorbed in enjoyment and expectation, and has no time nor thought for others, for reflection or observation. It loves the present, hardly thinks of the past and, as to the future—which it considers to be all its own—it troubles no more about it than a man does about his means securely invested. Old age, on the other hand, conscious of the individual's insignificance, of the lessons contained in the past and the problems presented by the future—extends its thoughts and endeavors to humanity and the universe, and, while borne along on the wave of the present, looks up the stream into the past and down the stream into the future.

· · ·

**I**N old age we are inclined to think and speak of the past. After having walked long on life's road, the view before us diminishes in extent and loses in interest—and we frequently turn round to take a look at the more extensive and more beautiful scenes we have left behind us.

· · ·

**K**NOWLEDGE is favorable, not detrimental to religion and virtue. The sun of enlightenment warms the heart while it illuminates the mind.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**Y**OUTH is fond of the world—for the world is a perpetually shifting scene, and youth delights in change. The older we grow, however, the more develops in us an inclination to rest, the friend of stability, and we get more and more in conflict with the restless, unstable world. Finally the perpetual change, the ceaseless turning of the giant-wheel, becomes confusing, tormenting—and when Death, with the promise of rest, appears at the threshold, he is not unwelcome.

· · ·

**Y**OUTH in the exuberance of health and strength is apt to abuse both—just as the rich are prone to be extravagant. Old age must husband out what health and strength it has left—for the poor have to economize.

· · ·

**I**N old age, time seems to fly more swiftly than in youth—for when old, we enjoy less fully life's pleasures and undergo less impatiently life's tribulations, so that the duration of either joy or pain seems shorter.

· · ·

**I**N mature age we are more sensible and less passionate; we are both better shielded and less assailed.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**A**GILE youth considers not that it will gradually change into slowly moving old age, and wintry old age can no more remember the spring-like feelings of youth. Children see not in their parents the image of their own future, nor parents in their children that of their own past. Were it otherwise, youth would honor more old age, and old age would find more pleasure in the companionship of youth; children would be more loving and obedient to their parents, and parents more forbearing and forgiving to their children.

· · ·

**Y**OUTH is welcome, for we like to see a youthful, blooming face; old age has to make itself welcome by amiable qualities. Youth recommends itself; old age has to be recommended.

· · ·

**Y**OUTH does not see death—for life in all its glory stands like a dense, green forest between. It is only in the late autumn of life, when all illusions, one by one, have fallen off like dead leaves, that a view of the grave opens to the eye.

· · ·

**P**OOOR city-dweller! every day thy friends, the sunlight and the pure air, would like to come and see thee, to gladden and refresh thee; but, hemmed in as thou art by a thousand walls and

## M E D I T A T I O N S

hidden in a labyrinth of streets, they cannot reach thee.

. . .

**I**N great cities the very tombstones must often make place for dwelling-houses. Life there is so aggressive that death itself has to yield to it its premises.

. . .

**O**H, the great city! where nature lies buried under the paving-stones, and the natural inclinations of the human heart are choked by love of money, love of pleasure, and love of display; where, in the overdense human forest, but few can thrive and so many must suffer; whence a thousand unnecessary articles are sent to repay for the harvest of thousands of acres which it consumes; where the great temple of Fashion stands and whence the worship of this idol is propagated; where the head is overworked and the nerves are overstrained; where immorality and crime find most victims and the best hiding-places; where the streets are haunted by hideous sin, pale-faced disease, and gray-headed care; where vices and follies swarm as thick as gnats on a sultry summer's day.

. . .

**H**OW sweet is life's autumn! The burning heat and the violent storms of the passions are over. Life's sun is still shining brightly and warmly; but its light dazzles no more and its warmth is temper-

## M E D I T A T I O N S

ate. Observing and thinking begin—the delightful rambles of the mind in the garden of God. Our inner life, which by the continual restlessness of youth, had been like the tossing sea, now resembles a calmly flowing river conscious of its goal. The people around us whom, absorbed in ourselves, we had but superficially known, now have our due attention and for the first time are understood by us fully. Expecting now little from life and the world, and having been set free by kind nature from the bondage of many desires, we are more ready to sympathize with those who are still in life's spring or summer, whose longings and expectations are ardent and who are stung to the quick by disappointments.

. . .

THE great city, devouring the country all around, is spreading farther and farther. The field is trembling, the forest is shaking. "What has befallen our neighbors will soon befall us too," they say mournfully to one another, "the city, the ever advancing conqueror, is approaching; it will mow us down, bury us under pavements and brick walls. . . ." "Hush!" interrupts a tall tree, "I see a man coming, the being who is the cause of all the destruction. Look, he is going up to the great oak; he is fastening a paper on it. Alas, that is its death-warrant and the doom of us all!" A shiver runs through field and forest.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**P**ROVIDENCE allows us mostly a few drops of sweetness in which to dip the bitter herbs of life.

...

**G**OD needs us not, but our poorer fellow-men do. Soothing and consoling words, spoken to the old, the sick, and the unfortunate, please God better than all the hymns we chant to Him, and raising up a fallen brother is more than raising a church.

...

**W**E must not try to draw God down to earth, but strive to lift ourselves up to Him.

...

**T**HE Lord giveth to His beloved dreamless nights and dreamful days.

...

**O**UR innocent pleasures are as pleasing to God as the joys of a child are to its father.

...

**I**T is harder for humanity to attain equality than liberty, and hardest to attain fraternity.

...

**S**ILENT tears spring from a deeper source than loud weeping.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**EARS flow from different and opposite sources: from grief and joy, from mortification and gratefulness, from disappointment and hope fulfilled, from love lost and love won, from despair and hope revived. They are, consciously or unconsciously, a libation offered to the supreme Power when the heart is appealing to Him or rendering Him thanks.

. . .

**T**EARS unshed flow inwards and furrow the heart; grief unexpressed soliloquizes in the heart where it is imprisoned and makes it doubly sad.

. . .

**T**HE inward storm exhausts itself in tears, as does the tempest in rain.

. . .

**O**UR present tears have mostly been rising for some time out of our troubles, like vapors out of the waters, clouding our head and heart—and now, by an insignificant cause, perhaps, fall down like rain.

. . .

**S**UNLIGHT breaking in rainbow glory through a cloud offers not a more beautiful sight than joy shining through tears.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**A**S the swollen river overflows its banks, so our feelings run over in tears when they find no more place in the oppressed heart.

..

**W**HEN lack of joy and abundance of sorrow has long been our lot, we sometimes feel as if all within us were parched and withered and our heart is athirst and faint. Then Heaven sends us relief in tears, and each drop falls on our suffering heart like the blessed rain on a dry field: refreshing, reviving.

..

**G**REAT misfortune comes over us and, behold! all our every-day troubles, that had been chafing and fretting us so much and so long, become suddenly insignificant in our eyes. In the presence of the great affliction, our petty cares appear in all their littleness. But why had we ever allowed ourselves to be tormented by them? Had we not known that terrible disasters visit the children of man, and had we to wait for the appearance of one of them at our door to find out of how little account our daily vexations are?

..

**S**UFFERING must be an integrant part of existence, or how else can it be explained why the All-merciful has introduced it in the scheme of creation? Certain it is that man is purified by it, as gold is refined by fire.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

A GREAT grief is like a deep wound: it may heal, but at the slightest incident we are reminded that it had never healed completely.

. . .

SCHOOL yourself to bear patiently the irritating sting of the petty vexations with which life is swarming, and be prepared for the great trials of life.

. . .

OUR cares frequently make us selfish. They engross all our thoughts, so that we have no thought left for the problems of humanity; they fill all our heart, leaving no space for sympathy with the cares of others.

. . .

JOY brightens the eye, while grief and care make it dim—for the eye, dependent on outward light and darkness, is also affected by inward sunshine and gloom.

. . .

KNIGHTS in armor on their prancing steeds have been more than once overthrown in battle by peasants in blouses and on foot—for the consciousness of fighting on the side of right endows the warrior with miraculous strength.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**D**ETAILS of wars and battles occupy by far too much space in our histories. This dates from the time when warriors—the forefathers of kings and nobles—were considered the only important persons and their wars the only important events.

. . .

**T**HE importance of historical events is to be measured by the degree of their influence on human progress, either in promoting or checking it.

. . .

**T**WO hostile armies ready for battle may pray at the same time for the help of God—but God knows which army bears the banner of the good cause.

. . .

**T**HE progress of humanity is owing to a wonderfully small number of men who, one after another in the course of history, have taken, Atlas-like, the whole globe on their shoulders and carried it farther.

. . .

**T**HE literature, art, and philosophy of the Greeks; the generalship, statesmanship, and jurisprudence of the Romans; the ethics and ideals of the Hebrews have made an indelible impress on the human mind.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HREE little countries have had the greatest influence on the development of mankind: little Palestine, little Greece, and little England.

. . .

**T**HE teachings of a small, secluded people and the language of a small, insulated country—the teachings of the Hebrews and the language of England—seem destined to become universal.

. . .

**A**S the winds carry grains of seed to distant fields, so political storms frequently carry the germs of civilization to remote countries.

. . .

**I**N determining the merit of a book, the foolish consider the author; the wise consider the contents. The foolish want a personal authority; the wise judge of everything according to its intrinsic value.

. . .

**T**HE body of critics is composed of the most heterogeneous members. From the learned, profound, incorruptible judge, espousing the cause of truth and justice and susceptible of all literary beauty and grace, to the ignorant, superficial, and prejudiced detractor—are represented therein.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**A**LL respect to critics whose arrows are sharpened by wit; but shame on those whose arrows are poisoned by malice.

. . .

**I**T is as incumbent on the learned to impart of what they know as on the rich to give of what they possess; but selfishness often steals even into our noblest endeavors, so that, wrapped up in the high enjoyment of enriching our minds, we forget our duty of making others share our acquired treasures.

. . .

**W**E like to have our eye deluded by art—for the better the artist succeeds in making the inanimate look animate and the impalpable look palpable, the greater is his art, and the higher is the enjoyment in contemplating his work.

. . .

**P**EOPLE with natural manners are like a limpid brook: you can see their character, their way of thinking and feeling, all their inner life as clearly as you can see the pebbles on the bed of the brook through the transparent water. People with artificial manners are like an ice-covered river: the movements of their heart and the currents of their thoughts, all the inner workings of their individual character, are covered by a uniform, cold, rigid exterior.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**F we give people cause to think that we are not fully satisfied with them, they will not be satisfied with us either—for our dissatisfaction with their conduct implies that we think ourselves better than they, otherwise we should make allowance for their shortcomings, as we expect them to do for ours—and people dislike those who think themselves their superiors.

. . .

**P**EOPLE in general envy the rich, find the world very wicked, and have much to say about the ignorance and dulness of their fellow-men. Concerning worldly advantages they look up; concerning moral and mental qualities they look down. To the detriment of their contentment and improvement, they do just the contrary of what they ought to do.

. . .

**B**OOKS may be likened unto rivers. Some are clear but shallow; some are deep, but not clear; some are neither clear nor deep; some are both.

. . .

**N**OBLE thoughts in abstruse books are like treasures hidden away.

. . .

**T**HOUSANDS of newspaper sheets may not fill a single line in history.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**K**NOWING another language besides our own may be of the greatest moment. The circumstance that Paul knew Greek besides Hebrew greatly contributed to the victory of Christianity over paganism.

...

**T**O the English language seems to be reserved the high destiny of becoming universal. Shoots of various languages, brought to Britian at different times, gradually grew in the new soil into one vigorous tree which spread its branches all over the island. Before long, shoots of this tree, exported to all parts of the world, developed in the soil of North America and Southern Asia, Australia, and South Africa into such mighty trees that they hold forth the promise of becoming still greater than the mother-tree.

...

**T**HERE are plants which, in the most rigorous season, only need one warm, sunny day to push courageously their little heads out of the earth and bring forth leaves and blossoms which, maybe, will be nipped by the frost on the very morrow. There are men who, in the darkest time of adversity, need but a few rays of fortune's sunshine, and they raise their drooping heads, and their hopes bud and bloom which, perhaps, will be withered again the very ensuing day. These plants and these men we cannot contemplate without emotion.

## MEDITATIONS

**T**HERE are poor, happy, pitiable, enviable men who, like the bird warbling gayly on a bare twig at the approach of spring, rejoice hopefully all their life long in the midst of destitution—but *their* spring never comes. Ever in want, yet ever cheerful, their mouth filled with singing and their heart with hoping, they carry spring within them, while winter is always around them.

...

**A**VOID coldness in social intercourse, but just as much too much intimacy. Come near enough to people to feel the warmth of good-fellowship, but no nearer—just as you would come near enough to the fire to get warm, but no nearer.

...

**B**E a good listener; allow yourself to be instructed in the knowledge of human nature in this natural and direct way.

...

**T**RUE politeness springs from the consciousness of man's worth.

...

**T**HE only thing that awes the foolish and the ignorant is power to which they have to yield. I dare say, the bird flying across the river looks down with disdain on the clumsy human creatures that crawl along the bridge; but as for the bridge,

## M E D I T A T I O N S

and be its structure ever so ingenious, the bird regards it not. On the other hand, the bird imprisoned in a cage is, I dare say, struck with awe at the ingenuity of man that devised such a strong prison, baffling all its efforts of escape.

· · ·

THE great capacities of the mind and the noble qualities of the heart, if not attended with power, impress but little the multitude. Even religion would not strike them with reverence, if it was not for the belief that God is all-powerful.

· · ·

OUR folly is so great that we often *buy* ourselves masters, and pay a high price for what hurts us.

· · ·

THE foolish are often proud of what they ought to be ashamed of, and ashamed of what they ought to be proud of.

· · ·

THERE are irremediable follies which, once committed, can never be remedied—as there are incurable diseases which, once contracted, can never be cured.

· · ·

FOLLY is easily swayed by passion, for both take only the present into consideration.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE foolish seek to obtain honor through haughtiness: they want to call attention to their dignity by showing their vanity.

· · ·

**F**OLLY has a larger kingdom on earth than wickedness—for much of the wickedness of the world grows in the soil of folly.

· · ·

**T**HERE are people who have good hearts and evil tongues. Their folly often cuts off communication between their heart and tongue.

· · ·

**T**HE foolish dislike being alone: they are poor company even for themselves.

· · ·

**M**ANY parents treat their children as children do their dolls: they caress them, they pass their time with them and exhibit them proudly. That they bring up beings whose body they are to render strong, whose mind they are to render bright, whose heart they are to render good—seems not to occur to them.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**EXCITEMENT** preys on our health and puts us in a state of irritability which often disqualifies us from being rational or just in word and action. It has the same effect on children. It is injurious to them physically and checks their development in mind and heart. Beware of exciting them; be it by teasing, surprising, threatening, or hurting them.

· · ·

**THE** little child is to be properly fed, kept clean, and watched over by its mother; but not constantly carried about in her arms, seated in her lap, talked to and crooned over. It must be accustomed from the very first to pass its time as much as possible by itself. That the child gives no peace to its mother is mostly the result of the mother habituating the child to *want* her even when it does not *need* her.

· · ·

**SOME** parents who are said to have left nothing to their children have transmitted to them qualities, accustomed them to habits, inculcated on them precepts and set them examples—the value whereof no amount of gold can equal.

· · ·

**CHILDREN** and nations may be too much governed. The unskilful rider tugging unnecessarily at the bridle makes the horse balky.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**W**ITH ill-used children and oppressed nations, sense and sensibility are so often violated that they become blunted.

. . .

**M**AKE of everything possible an instrument of education for your children, particularly of the objects that daily surround them at home. If a picture hangs on the wall, explain to them what it represents; if a book stands on the shelf, impart to them as much of its contents as is within the reach of their understanding; if you keep a domestic animal, teach them by precept and example to treat it tenderly; if you have a plant, instruct them to take as loving care of it as if it were a living being and would suffer from any unfriendly touch. Then the picture will give life to the dead wall, the book will make the mute shelf eloquent, and a soul will be breathed into animal and plant. Then the home will appear to your children a temple where altars are erected to art and learning, to affection, tenderness and poetry, and of which you, their parents, are the priests, adepts in all the sacred mysteries into which you gradually initiate them.

. . .

**T**HREE trees are planted near one another—two thrive, the third does not; two shine in the full glory of their foliage, the third has to content itself year after year with but a few leaves. The two are alert, talkative, gay; the third is quiet, silent, pensive

## M E D I T A T I O N S

When the least breeze arises, the two bow to each other and have a lively talk; the third stands solitary, motionless, unnoticed. Made supersensitive by misfortune and loneliness, the third sometimes imagines to overhear the two whispering suspiciously and to see them stealthily pointing at his thin, bare trunk. "They are exchanging slighting remarks about me," he thinks, and a shudder passes through his poor few leaves.

...

SOMETIMES the position a man is occupying in the world has as little to do with his own choice, as the place wherein a nail is driven has to do with the choice of the nail. Fate has put him there in the same manner as the hammer has lodged the nail—consulting him as much and treating him as gently.

...

AS the guide leads the wayfarer up the mountains by the shortest, easiest, and most pleasant paths, so the teacher leads the pupil up the heights of knowledge. The guide carries not the wayfarer who is ready to climb the highest peaks; he only shows him the way. The teacher is not to carry but to guide the pupil, who must be willing to ascend the summits of knowledge on his own feet, following the footsteps of his teacher.

## MEDITATIONS

**I**N moments when inactivity is forced upon you, try to *think*. You will soon find that tediousness, depression, and impatience will change to a feeling of satisfaction, and time, that had been creeping snail-like, will make itself wings. Or are you in want of matter for reflection? Can neither present, past, nor future feed your thoughts? Cannot memory hold up to you a picture of the past pleasant to look at? Cannot imagination fill the vacant future with brightness and beauty? Have you not, had you not a dear friend on whom your thoughts would like to dwell? Have you fathomed all the depths of your own being? Are you satisfied with the discoveries you have made there? And if not, how is the improvement to be brought about? Have not human aspirations, has not nature any problems deserving your consideration?

...

**H**E who likes to commune with nature and sees the divine therein, likes also to commune with himself: to think—for in his own heart he finds again the wonders of nature and the revelation of God.

...

**N**OT he who awakens in misery from the revelry of extravagance deserves our compassion, nor he who undergoes privation to protect himself from future wants; but he who has been born under such an unlucky star that without preceding dissipation

## M E D I T A T I O N S

is always in actual need, and with all his privations sees only a disconsolate future before him.

. . .

**P**ARTIAL destiny gives to one the fruit of autumn without subjecting him to the labor and care preceding the harvest; to another the sweat and toil of summer without the deserved fruit. To one it gives the hope and joy, the blossoms and songs of spring; to another the cheerlessness and desolation of winter.

. . .

**A** RANDOM sentence pronounced by the blind judge, Fate, sometimes decides our success or failure.

. . .

**T**HERE is no prosaic spot on earth. Everywhere nature's wonderful workings keep the poetical mind in rapture; and wherever there are human beings . . . their aspirations after perfection, their thoughts reaching up to the stars and encompassing eternity—contrasted with their animal wants, their fate as mortals, their sorrows, cares, and failings—melt the poet's heart with emotion, fill it with pity, and exalt it with love and hope

. . .

**T**HERE is no reform without martyrdom—for *the world improves reluctantly*, and it strikes first at those who dare force it to become better.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**T gives the wicked joy to hear and to tell what is to some one's discredit—for even the wicked know and feel that wickedness is degrading, and it is a satisfaction to them that some are as low or lower than they. It gives the good joy to hear and to tell what is to some one's credit—for all their life long they are battling for the good and right, and the more fellow-combatants they find, the more they rejoice.

. . .

**T**HERE are people who seem to be constantly afraid they may, perhaps, do for the world a trifle more than the world does for them—so extremely saving are they with good deeds, affable words, nay, even with friendly looks. They are excusable: being so poor in the affections of the heart, they must be particularly sparing in the use of them.

. . .

**C**RITICISM winnows the products of the mind, separating the chaff from the grain.

. . .

**B**ROTHERS and sisters, born in the same parental house, are often widely scattered, and their graves may, in the end, be far apart. Whether they should bodily remain together, is in God's hand; whether they should cleave unto one another in heart and thought, is in their own hand.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**W**IT is like lightning: it flashes and it strikes, and flash and stroke are simultaneous.

..

**T**HE nobleman, fondly tracing his ancestry several generations back, is proud of his descent; but every one who takes an interest in the history of his forefathers and feels proud of every generous trait in his family is stamped by nature as a nobleman.

..

**T**HE Holy Virgin with the Saviour Child has been a favorite subject of the old masters and the new; but any mother with her child is a grand subject for the greatest artist.

..

**T**HREE things are touching: an old couple keeping their love young; the poor helping the poorer; and aged parents as affectionately cared for by their children, as tender children are by their parents.

..

**T**HE foolish speak, laugh, and weep aloud and generally make much noise and bustle. They are so insignificant in the world's scheme that they instinctively fear their very existence might be unknown if they did not loudly proclaim it.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**H**UMAN folly is so great that, while every one is sure of loving himself, the conduct of many is such as to make us cry in our hearts when witnessing it: "Oh, be not so cruel to yourselves! do, have pity with yourselves!"

· · ·

**I**T is characteristic of the foolish to have absurdly wrong ideas of the relative greatness and importance of persons and things. Those ideas remind one of the drawings dating from a time when the rules of perspective were as yet unknown—where a man might look taller than a steeple and a horse larger than a house.

· · ·

**W**HEREVER folly grows, vanity, haughtiness, superstition, and prejudice spring up and wind around it. They are supported by it and feed on it: they are folly's parasites.

· · ·

**W**ITH what courage and perseverance do men defend their strongholds against the attacks of the enemy! and yet, look at the intemperate: nature has fortified them against their enemy, intemperance, by sense, decency, and the instinct of self-preservation—and, lo! they break down those defences with their own hands and rejoicingly receive the enemy who weakens and destroys their body and mind.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**S**ELF-CONTROL dams in the passions from overflowing their banks and becoming destructive.

· · ·

**T**HE cringing flatterer and the haughty tyrant have the same low nature, only their conditions differ. They belong to the same species as do the grovelling and the winged insects.

· · ·

**E**VERY flatterer is a tyrant when it is in his power, and every tyrant is a flatterer when it is to his interest.

· · ·

**L**END no ear to slander: how can you believe a slanderer?

· · ·

**T**HE slanderer is a coward: he attacks the defenceless, the absent.

· · ·

**T**IME, the most precious coin, cannot be saved or hoarded; it must be spent, and spent immediately, by all alike. Some, however, buy with it what is highest and noblest; others what is most frivolous or even most hurtful.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

USE time, your inseparable life-companion, well; esteem it, love it; then it will requite you by many blessings. But woe to you if you misuse it! for its vengeance is sure and terrible.

· · ·

IF we have more time than we know how to make use of, it sinks in value, like everything the supply of which exceeds the demand. We depreciate then our time, our life.

· · ·

HE who knows not how to make use of his time is not a free man. Like a slave, he must be *given* employment, but cannot find any for himself.

· · ·

HOW can he know the value of time who has never bought anything valuable with it?

· · ·

THE step of time is inaudible; but when we look at the destruction in its trail, we fancy to hear perpetually the heavy tramp of a hostile army marching through the land.

· · ·

TO kill time, to destroy part of our life, is suicidal.

## MEDITATIONS

**M**ODERN industry, the offspring of modern science, while contributing to human happiness in some respects, is decidedly impairing it in a great many others. It enables a few to heap up untold riches, but reduces millions to extreme poverty; it creates a few powerful masters, but also a multitude of helpless slaves; it takes all the joy out of the work of the masses by connecting it with dependence, hurry, clatter, and machine-like activity; it favors the growth of great, overcrowded cities, where to the wretchedness of poverty is added the misery of close quarters, bad air, adulterated food, incessant noise, and undesirable neighbors; it leads mankind farther and farther away from nature and simplicity, and renders life more and more artificial and complicate.

· · ·

**G**O to mother earth and let her nourish you. All the innocence of the child at its mother's breast may then be yours. Humanity is ailing, being unnaturally weaned from mother earth.

· · ·

**N**O greater king than he whose mind commands the illimitable realm of thought; none richer than he through whose heart golden streams of noble feelings flow.

· · ·

**S**ACRED feelings may be desecrated by utterance.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE higher our thoughts and the deeper our feelings, the more susceptible we are of joy and pain. The philosopher and poet revels in delights and suffers pangs of which the superficial and prosaic have no conception.

. . .

**S**OLITUDE is the school of thought.

. . .

**T**HE highest enjoyment of the thoughtful consists in concentration of the mind, not in diversion.

. . .

**A**S provident nature has given to birds particularly sensitive to inclement weather the instinct of flying to milder climes—so beneficent Providence has endowed delicate natures suffering most from the hardships of life with the glorious capacity of rising on the wings of thought and fancy to blissful, higher regions, far away from the miseries of the earth.

. . .

**I**F, when the child stumbles and falls, you rush to its assistance, take it up in your arms, kiss it and soothe it—you trample on the tender germs of reason which nature has planted in the child's breast for gradual development. *You* are not to

## M E D I T A T I O N S

blame for the child's fall; still you act as if you were. Is the child to find that the consequence of being imprudent is to be fondled and kissed and soothed, or is it to discover that fright and hurt might follow imprudence, and learn to be more careful in future?

. . .

**D**ISFIGURE not the words when speaking to the little child: it will learn the right word with no more difficulty than the wrong; let not your talk to it be absurd or illogical: why should you hurry to plant the seed of irrationality in the child's mind?

. . .

**S**OME strive for a higher education from low motives. Like the vulture, they want to rise high, so as to survey a vaster space where spoil may be found.

. . .

**A** GOOD part of the child's destiny is foreshadowed in its parents — for health and strength, capacities and inclinations come down to us largely by heredity and develop mostly according to home influence and home education.

. . .

**T**HE teacher learns while teaching, and the parents' education improves while educating their children.

## MEDITATIONS

**H**OWEVER little a teacher may succeed in teaching, he himself is sure to learn a great deal.

. . .

**V**ICE feeds largely on folly, and folly on ignorance; by overcoming ignorance, education cuts off the supplies of both folly and vice.

. . .

**L**ET not the child sink to the level of being your plaything, or an object for being exhibited to your friends—its self-respect and the respect it has for you will be impaired by it. The child has not been entrusted to your care to amuse you or to satisfy your vanity; it has higher claims on you.

. . .

**T**AKE heed not to let children see that you are annoyed by their naughtiness. All human beings like power, even children do, and if they notice that they have the power to annoy you, they will be tempted to wield it.

. . .

**T**HE man of head and heart is a kind of spiritual doctor to whom people naturally bring their complaints, describe their sufferings, pour out their hearts, and from whom they expect counsel and consolation. They know that his mind under-

## M E D I T A T I O N S

stands them, his heart feels with them, and that, while helping them carry their burdens, he will lay none of his own on their shoulders; that, like a physician, he is ready and able to soothe their sufferings, but does not expect them to alleviate his.

· · ·

**T**HE reflection of the world in an impure heart and uneasy mind is dim and distorted, like the reflection of the banks in a turbulent river—while the world is mirrored in all its beauty in a pure heart and tranquil mind, as is the beautiful shore in the clear, calm lake.

· · ·

**N**OT what we eat, but what we digest nourishes the body. Not what we read, but what we learn nourishes the mind.

· · ·

**W**E easily see the foibles of the great—for where there is much light, the smallest speck is discernible.

· · ·

**T**RULY great men learn most of themselves and the book of nature.

· · ·

**T**HE poet has a particular prayer: "I thank Thee, O Lord, for Thy inspiration."

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE philosopher and poet, a Prometheus, ascends to heaven on the wings of thought and fancy, and brings down divine light to man.

. . .

**T**HE poet and philosopher rambles through nature's beautiful scenes, as the bee flies through the flowery fields. He is attracted by the blossoms, revels in their cups, and returns home laden with sweets.

. . .

**T**HE better we are, the more peace and cheerfulness is in our heart; the wiser we are, the clearer and more exulting in activity is our mind; the more temperate we are, the less trouble our body gives us; the fewer our wants, the greater our independence.

. . .

**W**E are surrounded by enemies—our passions assail us from within and the world's temptations from without. The battle is fierce, our defeats are frequent. Woe to the warrior who returns not to the charge again and again! who endureth not until the victory is his!

. . .

**E**VERY sin is a cowardly blow struck by the selfish present at the defenceless future.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**G**UARD your heart carefully—for the least evil stealing into it may traitorously open the gates to a whole host of evils.

. . .

**T**HEREIN lies a great reward of virtue and a heavy punishment of vice that every good or bad habit, every good or bad action is apt to be followed by a train of others like it.

. . .

**T**HE combat in which our virtue is engaged against external foes, against adversity and temptation, is not so perilous as that against its internal enemies, the evil propensities in our own heart—just as a foreign invasion is less disastrous than a civil war.

. . .

**T**O be wicked is to be unreasonable—for we cannot be happy without being good.

. . .

**T**HE virtues of some show best on the golden ground of fortune; those of others on the dark ground of misfortune.

. . .

**W**E see powerful frames shattered prematurely, and delicately constituted people whose days are long upon the earth. We see youth inviting

## M E D I T A T I O N S

the infirmities of old age by folly and vice, and old age keeping the vigor of youth from departing by prudence and temperance.

. . .

**T**HE same thing may be beneficial or harmful according to its degree of intensity. The wind may be a refreshing breeze or a destroying tempest, and a virtue carried to excess becomes a vice.

. . .

**T**HE close thinker makes all the rays of his thoughts converge and lets that concentrated light fall on the point to be considered.

. . .

**F**EW can climb the highest pinnacles of abstract thought; the most become dizzy after reaching but a moderate height.

. . .

**I**N some heads metaphysical philosophy degenerates into a kind of all-wise craziness.

. . .

**T**HINKING is digging for gold in the mine of the intellect. The empty-headed, having nothing to look for within themselves, are not inclined to reflection.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

WE might speak of *six* senses and call the sixth thinking. In each of the five, man is surpassed by many other living beings; but in the sixth he is far superior to them all—and this superiority alone sufficed to make him master of the world.

. . .

IF steam is allowed to scatter in all directions, its force is unnoticeable; but, if confined within certain limits and compelled to move in one direction, its power may produce wonderful effects. There is the same difference between rambling and concentrated thinking.

. . .

LET not your thoughts rest on petty things: life is too short and time too precious to give a moment's thought to trivial matters. Let not your thoughts rest on mean people: the mind is too noble a dwelling to be occupied by low tenants.

. . .

IF your lot is cast among the unrefined, take heed that your finer feelings perish not by being exposed to derision. Shelter them in your heart and tend them carefully, as you would shelter tender plants from the rough air.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**S**OME will not check wild passion until it hurls them into a precipice; some have the strength, the skill, or the good luck to rein it in on the very brink—and the sight of the abyss they have escaped will impress itself forever on their memory and be a caution and a warning.

· · ·

**L**IFE'S enjoyments crowded by passion cheer no more, but harm—as the rays of the sun made to converge by the burning-glass warm no more, but burn.

· · ·

**T**HE intemperate make of their bodies alternately a feasting-hall and a sick-chamber.

· · ·

**T**REAT eating, drinking, and sleeping as necessities, not enjoyments, and you will enjoy them all three.

· · ·

**N**OT until man had subdued the wild beasts could he be master of the earth. Not until man has overcome his wild passions can he be master of himself.

· · ·

**V**IRTUE is exercised and strengthened by having continually to ward off the attacks of outward temptations and inward passions.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE repentant are forgiven by God and may be forgiven by men; the consciousness, however, that they can only do better in the future, but not remedy all the consequences of the wrong done—makes them endeavor to balance the irremediable wrong by extraordinary virtues and uncommon good deeds, and has sometimes made saints of sinners.

· · ·

**I**NTELLECT, if not joined with character, cannot guide us through stormy life. Intellect is, indeed, a light unto our path; but a light exposed to the wind flickers or is extinguished. It is character that screens the light of intellect.

· · ·

**H**E who is conscious of having done an irreparable wrong feels like one suffering from an incurable disease.

· · ·

**V**ERY few people put an end to their life, but a great many shorten it.

· · ·

**V**IRTUE and vice are very prolific and, according to the law of nature, they bring forth children of their kind.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**V**IRTUE and wisdom look grave; but it is the gravity of angels' faces—which still enhances their beauty.

. . .

**I**T is a fatal error to think that virtue, the source of our purest joys, has its reward only in the hereafter—and that vice, the cause of our greatest misery, finds its punishment only in the world to come.

. . .

**T**HE wicked are insane people that strike at themselves.

. . .

**A** WICKED life is slow suicide.

. . .

**M**ENTAL keen-sightedness which enables us to see the right path, and moral fortitude which makes us walk in the right path—are, unfortunately, not always united.

. . .

**T**HE heart influences the mind; the mind reacts on the heart. Whoever is good cannot be entirely unreasonable; whoever is unreasonable cannot be entirely good.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**S**OME minds become torpid in the gloom of misfortune, while the bright light of fortune arouses them—just as the darkness of night lulls us to sleep, while daylight awakens us.

...

**T**HE body is a temple wherein the Holy Spirit, the soul, dwelleth. Profane it not by neglect, by intemperance.

...

**T**HE ardent desire of those who are rich in mind to enrich themselves still more, is as absorbing as the craving of the rich for more gold.

...

**L**ET not your judgment be biased by your feelings. That you wish a thing were true is no proof that it is true; that you like a thing is no proof that it is right; that you love people is no proof that they are not wrong or to blame.

...

**H**AD the poor more head and the rich more heart, most social problems would be solved.

...

**T**HE rich dissipate and think not of the poor; the poor murmur and think too much of the rich.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

OF what use would it be to divide all possessions equally among men? Nature's unequal distribution of qualities and capacities would soon remove the landmarks again.

..

INEQUALITY among men will ever continue—for we can give, indeed, the same rights to all; but not the same qualities, nor the same destiny. Humanity's sense of right may do its utmost to defend the weak against the strong; but it cannot remedy the partiality of nature and destiny that makes some strong and some weak.

..

THAT riches are computed by gold, by something dispensable, gives the right idea of riches themselves, which are as dispensable to human happiness.

..

IF you have been wronged, if a wave of the sea of wrong has struck against you, let it not flow on by returning evil for evil; but, by forgiving and returning good for evil, build a dike against it, so that it spread not from you onward.

..

THE ancients had, perhaps, too few books; we have decidedly too many.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE combat with ourselves is the longest, fiercest, and most momentous of our lives—and the victory of the good over the evil in us is the most glorious we can ever achieve.

. . .

**T**HE great men of all ages have recognized, spoken or written the principal truths—but the forms of thought and manners of expression are so manifold that the sayings and writings of each bear the stamp of freshness and originality.

. . .

**T**HE ancient writers make us think: what knowledge in an age when books were so scarce! Some modern writers make us think: what ignorance in an age when books are so abundant!

. . .

**T**O read what is worthless is to use the key, which might unlock the treasure-house of literature, for opening empty rooms.

. . .

**T**O be constantly engrossed in acquiring knowledge without ever imparting any, is like hoarding riches without ever giving the smallest part of it.

## MEDITATIONS

SOMETIMES fate destroys in a moment what it had taken us years of persevering industry to accomplish—but that proves not the uselessness of industry and perseverance; it only demonstrates the pitilessness of fate.

. . .

NOT only others judge us by our success or failure; we ourselves are inclined to have a higher or lower opinion of our virtues and capacities according to the rise and fall of our fortune.

. . .

ADVERSITY is as good an agent in promoting good as prosperity. If the sun of prosperity favors the development of some virtues, the clouds of adversity make other virtues grow, while its storms uproot many a defect. If prosperity enables us to be bountiful, adversity increases our helpfulness by rendering us sympathetic, compassionate, self-sacrificing.

. . .

OVERINDULGENCE may harm the child just as much as ill-treatment—and being too much favored by fortune may harm a man just as much as being ill-used by misfortune.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**W**HEN our fortune, which we had never appreciated, is shattered, we value what we have saved from the wreck; when our health is weakened by age and shaken by disease, we begin taking care of it; when the best part of our life is spent, we become inclined to make good use of our time.

...

**W**ALK with understanding through the fields of life. Learn to find the beautiful flowers and to distinguish the useful plants from the hurtful.

...

**R**EASON, like our eye-sight, has been given us that we might see our way through life. Not to be guided by our own reason, but solely by the precepts of others, living or dead, is to close our eyes deliberately and to be led about like the blind.

...

**K**EEP your body healthy, your heart pure, your mind clear, your disposition sweet. The sick body, the troubled conscience, the muddled brain, the bad temper—how teeming they are with suffering and degradation!

...

**T**HE most cruel are those who find pleasure in cruelty.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**C**ONSIDER not the smallest creature unworthy of thy mercy. Dost thou not ask mercy of God, and art thou of greater importance compared to Him than the smallest creature is compared to thee?

· · ·

**I**F we can make others suffer without suffering by it ourselves, we must be cruel; if we can make others suffer although we suffer by it ourselves, we must be foolish.

· · ·

**A**S the finest colors are blended in light, so the most tender feelings are united in love.

· · ·

**M**ANY would get lost in the labyrinth of life if a loving hand held not the thread which enables them to find their way in the maze.

· · ·

**I**N ancient times the readers of books were very few, but they constituted the very best part of the people. The books were like the readers: very few and of the very best. In modern times the readers of books comprise nearly all the people. The books are like the readers: very many and mostly very ordinary.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

THE history of our own country cannot be properly understood if detached from universal history; our own language cannot be thoroughly learned if not compared with other languages.

...

THE stream of human knowledge constantly receives new tributaries—and we see it flowing through the ages, ever increasing in width and majesty.

...

NONE but thinking people can know a language fully—for words are merely the servants of thoughts, and the poorer a man is in thoughts the fewer words he employs, and *his* language is only a very small part of *the* language.

...

WE thoughtlessly allow envy and hate to enter our heart—and soon peace, contentment, and happiness, ever fleeing such companionship, depart thence.

...

SELFISHNESS is comprehensible — for poor, erring man may imagine that selfishness is to his advantage; but envy is incomprehensible, a diabolical element in the human heart.

## MEDITATIONS

HE who speaks ill of another considers not that people may doubt his slanderous tale, but cannot doubt his being a slanderer.

. . .

THE envious Gnomes first refused to man all-useful iron. Then their king said: "Let those beings have it. They abuse everything; they will also abuse this precious gift." Men were then allowed to bring iron up to light and, before long, they made weapons thereof and raised them murderously against each other. The malicious Gnomes have had cause for rejoicing ever since.

. . .

THE readiness to laugh at people, to mock and sneer is as surely the symptom of a morally diseased heart, as certain weaknesses are the sure symptoms of a physically diseased heart—and a disease of the heart, moral as well as physical, is vital.

. . .

IF we mortify a heart, we mortify two; the second is our own. If we gladden a heart, we gladden two; the second is our own.

. . .

STUPIDITY, malice, and anger disfigure the most beautiful features; a bright mind, a kind heart, and a sweet disposition transfigure the plainest face.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE principal laws governing the world are:  
attraction of gravitation and attraction of love.

...

**A**S matter contracts by cold and expands by warmth, so the heart contracts by coldness and expands by the warmth of love.

...

**M**AY God grant us to be loved in childhood, to love in manhood, and to be loveable in old age.

...

**R**ICHES, position, and power exempt us from many ordinary troubles, but burden us with a multitude of extraordinary cares; make many dependent upon us, but give no independence to ourselves; attract the attention of others to our external life, but call our own attention away from our internal life; make us great lords, but also the slaves of ambition and greed.

...

**H**EALTH in body and soul, inward peace, delight in nature, love to mankind, thirst for knowledge, enthusiasm for all that is good and beautiful, an absorbing interest in the progress of the world—are the great treasures the possession of which makes us surpassingly rich, however humble our lot on earth may be.

## MEDITATIONS

**T**HE frivolous heart when touched by the flame of love is, like dry straw that catches fire, quickly in a blaze which soon dies out. In the faithful heart love burns like the eternal light in a sanctuary.

...

**H**OW many great and noble minds, that might have brought forth the finest blossoms, the most delicious fruit to the delight and good of humanity, have, through want, pined away before their time. Like a vine without stay or support, they trailed along in the dust and died—never arriving at maturity.

...

**T**O teach, to cast seed in young minds and hearts which in time may yield a golden harvest of innumerable blessings to mankind—what an exalted calling!

...

**T**HERE is no happiness without inward peace; there is no inward peace unless the good prevails in our heart.

...

**B**EHOLD the happiness of children and consider that the sun of life, rising so gloriously, would delight us with its bright light and genial warmth even to its going down, if our passions clouded it not.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**F we had just balances to weigh the happiness of one against that of another, we should find to our great surprise that fortune has distributed her gifts among men much less unequally than we imagine.

. . .

**H**UMAN happiness lies within certain bounds. In his wild chase after happiness, however, man often overleaps those bounds—and while imagining to be still in pursuit of happiness, he is getting farther and farther away from it.

. . .

**H**APPINESS is a beautiful mosaic composed of the tiny particles of pure enjoyment which we pick up all along our path of life.

. . .

**T**EASING has an element of cruelty and is productive of harmful excitement. Never tease your children, never allow others to tease them, nor allow them to tease other children.

. . .

**F**RUIT trees bear fruit even if left to themselves; but the finest fruit is gained by careful cultivation. Uneducated children may grow up to be good men; but the noblest men, as a rule, have had a careful education.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**P**RAISE not children for their good looks, cleverness, or mental gifts: that is not their merit. Praise them for industry and obedience and for any good quality that requires painstaking and self-control.

. . .

**I**F there were not so many ill-bred parents, there would be fewer ill-bred children.

. . .

**P**RAISE not your children in the presence of people; it might make them vain. Their love and respect for you must be so great that your approving words or looks, even if unheard and unseen by any one else, are to them the highest reward.

. . .

**M**AMMON is demolishing the temples and subverting the statues of all the other gods—ruling more and more supreme and absolute. On the altars erected of old, to proud descent, to profound learning, to true piety, to venerable old age—less and less incense is being burned. Nobility is bought and sold; learning is hired; piety and old age are slighted and scorned, while humanity lies prostrate before Mammon's heartless and brainless golden image.

. . .

**O**UTWARD possessions suffice those who are inwardly poor.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**E**NVYING the rich is to a great extent the cause of the dissatisfaction of the poor; but let the poor consider that the rich are as much dissatisfied, and from the same cause: envying those who are richer.

. . .

**T**HE whole world belongs to him who delights in nature and loves humanity; who feels that nature's scenes and performances, that humanity's conditions and doings form an integrant part of his interest in life. Poor is the man who only has what he owns.

. . .

**S**OME authors reap a rich harvest from their writings; but where they have sown, posterity will find no fruit. Some reap nothing themselves; but the seed they have cast brings forth blossoms and fruit which will delight and nourish all generations to come.

. . .

**W**HAT astonishing exploits man has achieved! What miracles he is working every day! The lightning is his messenger, his torch; the sun his painter, steam his beast of burden. He rises high in the air, dives to the bottom of the sea, pierces through rocky mountains. He takes fleeting sound captive, causes water to take an upward course, and peers into worlds millions of miles away.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

AS nature is forever reproducing the human species, and yet no two individuals are ever alike—so the human genius is forever creating, and every production bears its own original stamp.

..

A NOBLE thought beautifully expressed is like a precious stone set in gold.

..

A BOOK, like a dish, may consist of the best ingredients, and yet be unpalatable.

..

THE teacher is to render learning easier for his pupils by able guidance, and the pupil is to facilitate teaching by his ready following; the parents are to prepare the child's way at school by careful training at home, and the teacher is to make the path of home-education smoother by inculcating the best principles in his pupils besides imparting knowledge to them. It is the close union of parents, teachers, and pupils that makes education complete.

..

THE young are best instructed and most influenced by people of inexhaustible patience and invariable equanimity and kindness, that is, by the strong in mind and character. The soft material of youth is moulded by the strong hand as clay is by the potter.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

A BOOK is rendered immortal by the felicitous blending therein of the good, true, and beautiful.

..

THE precepts of the wise and the examples of the good contribute largely to the education of mankind.

..

WHAT the world calls education is generally only training. Training certainly makes us more clever; but education should make us nobler.

..

OUR schools only equip youth for the battle of life; they are rather useful institutions than educational establishments.

..

LET the child grow up in *quiet*. Excite it not by exhibiting it, by making a plaything of it, by teasing it, by straining its physical strength or mental capacities. Like a young plant not yet firmly rooted, it will not bear violent shaking.

..

LET the child have as few and plain clothes, as few and plain playthings as possible. Let it begin early to find happiness in appreciating the little it has, rather than in the revelry of profusion which soon ends in satiety.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**F your child, incapable of pronouncing a word, mutilates it—use not this mutilated form of the word yourself in speaking to it; if your child is domineering, never allow it to dictate to you. The child learns everything by imitating its elders and by following their directions. If you imitate the child or do its bidding, you subvert its natural course of study and interrupt its mental development.

. . .

**W**ITH children of good parts and good breeding the teacher's task is easy: the soil is fertile and prepared; all he has to do is to strew the good seed.

. . .

**A**S the stairs take you up to the highest part of a building, so daily progress will lead you, step by step, to the summits of knowledge.

. . .

**T**HE children of the ignorant poor are hampered in their education by their parents' ignorance, but furthered by their poverty, which teaches them early many a grand lesson for life. The children of the educated rich have the advantage of being brought up by accomplished parents, but they seldom escape effeminacy and arrogance, the twin children of luxury attendant on riches. The children of the ignorant rich suffer both from their parents' want of education and from the evil effects which

## M E D I T A T I O N S

riches coupled with ignorance always have. The children of the educated poor have the double advantage of being brought up by refined parents and schooled by the strict master, poverty. It is from among these that most great men come.

. . .

**M**AN may be *born* mentally crippled and the germs of evil may preponderate in his *nature*; mostly, however, the warped mind and the perverted heart are the results of a wrong education.

. . .

**B**ATHE your eyes in the sweet sunlight; turn your thoughts on what is best, highest, and most beautiful; fill your heart with contentment and joy in life, with the feelings of kindness and love; let the beautiful world be reflected in your clear mind and pure heart, and let your inward light of cheerfulness and happiness unite with the outward light—rendering the world all the brighter.

. . .

**T**HE more dissatisfied we are, the more cause we will have for dissatisfaction—while the causes for contentment increase with the growth of our content.

. . .

**D**ISCONTENT and care are ungodly—for they mean dissatisfaction with the way Providence treats us and lack of faith concerning our future.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

OUR lot can in no way fall below our merit—  
for God can never be our debtor.

. . .

LIKE the foaming waves of the sea against the  
rocky coast—discontent, impatience, and anger  
dash again and again, and ever in vain, against the  
barriers drawn by nature and circumstances.

. . .

GIVE to the suppliant what you can, even if you  
are not sure of his being really in want of help  
and worthy of it. Rather run the risk of giving  
to the undeserving than of not giving to the de-  
serving.

. . .

THE greatest harm your enemy can do you is to  
provoke you to revenge.

. . .

REVENGE may taste like a dainty morsel, but  
we soon become aware that it contained  
poison.

. . .

WHAT exasperates the revengeful is not the  
wrong done, but the wrong done *to them*.

. . .

HE who can forgive is worthy of love. Our  
love to God is so great, because His forgive-  
ness is boundless.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**NGRATITUDE is incompatible with religion—  
for he who is ungrateful to man is not likely to  
be thankful to God.

. . .

**M**UTUAL affection and respect, mutual understanding and confidence, a common striving for the good and the true—are the foundations of friendship.

. . .

**W**HAT agriculture is to the soil, education is to man. If all land were under cultivation, what profusion of produce the earth would yield! If all mankind were educated, what abundance of fruit the human mind would bear!

. . .

**W**HAT polishing is to the rough diamond and sculpture to the marble block, education is to human nature.

. . .

**T**HERE are divine sparks in every human being which education may call forth — as steel elicits the sparks hidden in the flint.

. . .

**A**S the church is fitted for teaching the doctrines of the particular confession it represents, so the school, free from sectarian shackles, is fitted for teaching the universal religion embracing mankind,

## M E D I T A T I O N S

the religion enjoining purity, truthfulness, justice, and brotherly love.

. . .

**T**HE school-house door is the main entrance to knowledge and power, to greatness and honor, to fame and immortality.

. . .

**W**E teach youth earnestly and studiously the absolute and relative value of numbers, but we do not call their attention enough to the absolute and relative value of men and things, allowing them to grow up with many false notions in their views of the world: to look down, perhaps, on the noblest as of little worth, and to look up to the mean as paragons; to think lightly, maybe, of the weightiest matters, and to attach the greatest importance to trivialities.

. . .

**H**ABIT wields such power that many in whom evil inclinations prevail lead, nevertheless, a useful life, owing to the habits a good education has given them.

. . .

**H**ABIT is to the mind what inertia is to matter: good or bad, it continues until opposed by a greater force.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**H**ABIT insinuates itself wedge-like into our nature.

· · ·

**O**UR dearest memories cling to our school days, to that happy time when mind and body are vying with each other in their rapid growth; when parents and teachers are vying with one another in their endeavors to do most for our future; when our head is free from care and our heart is without guile; when the enjoyment of the present is full, and the vast future is all glittering in the golden light of hope.

· · ·

**B**RING up your child in the light of reason and the warmth of love, and it will, like a flower in the sunshine, develop best and most naturally.

· · ·

**Y**OU can easily correct children when they are convinced of your love to them; when they feel that you desire not to find fault, to rebuke, but to unite your strength to theirs and conjointly with them combat their faults.

· · ·

**I**F your children see and feel that you love them and that you hate whatever is bad, they cannot but strive to be good.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**B**E not over-ready to amuse the child, to give it your time, your company. Accustom it to have recourse to its own resources how to while away the time. This will cast in the child's mind the seed of independent thinking and of self-reliance.

· · ·

**B**E not over-ready to assist the child, nor thrust your guidance on it; give it time to become fully aware of its helplessness and need of a guide, and then let it apply to you for help and guidance, as the weak do to the strong, as those who know not the way apply to them who do. Let no occasion pass to make the child conscious of its need of you, and it will be easily guided.

· · ·

**A**S the church is holy because it is the house of God, so every place is sacred where goodness or wisdom, the highest attributes of God, have taken up their abode. An institution of benevolence and a seat of learning are both sacred.

· · ·

**I**MMEDIATELY after the committal of a fault is the least propitious time for reprimand. Any wrong-doing is attended with a feeling of humiliation, of dissatisfaction with oneself—and if you have the generosity not to speak of the fault just then, not to humiliate still more, but, on the contrary,

## M E D I T A T I O N S

to redouble your kindness, to extend your sympathy more than ever—then he who has committed the fault will feel thankful and be ready to listen to your exhortations at a more opportune time.

· · ·

**T**O have to drag one who is unwilling to go is but a slight exertion compared with the toil of having to teach one who is unwilling to learn.

· · ·

**T**EACH children justice and duty, which are based on reason and form the mind; teach them generosity and self-denial, which are dictated by the feelings and form the heart.

· · ·

**P**EOPLE'S social talents are best demonstrated by the quality they possess of diffusing cheerfulness in society.

· · ·

**T**O speak indistinctly, to write illegibly, is an impoliteness. It betokens self-indulgence without regard to others.

· · ·

**N**EVER complain—for whether your complaint be of ill health, the vexations of your calling, hard times, the cruelty of fate, or the baseness of men, it will be ascribed to some fault of your own.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**PRACTISE** virtue and enjoy happiness, but speak little of either.

. . .

**T**HE habit of speaking ill of people, like many other bad habits, is often born of folly and vanity. The foolish and vain make use of the biting, sharp, and bitter quality of malice to season their insipid talk.

. . .

**S**LANDERING is wicked; but listening to slander, believing it and passing it on is no less wicked. We must oppose it; not assist it with ear, heart, or mouth.

. . .

**P**EOPLE determine the value of men as they do that of numbers—by their position.

. . .

**R**ACIAL, national, sectarian, political prejudices are generally mutual; those we are prejudiced against are, as a rule, as much prejudiced against us. If the prejudices of the stronger against the weaker party are alone taken notice of by the world, it is not because they have a better foundation, but because, being supported by power, they are so much more harmful. Let the prejudiced strong bear that in mind!

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HAT other people are not like yourself, that other nations are not like your own, is no better reason for you to be prejudiced against them than for them to be prejudiced against you and your nation.

..

**O**UR selfishness is so great that we find an excuse for almost any wrong we commit, and our conceit is so great that we discover a reason for congratulating ourselves on *some* merit, however undeserving we may be.

..

**P**RIVILEGES are gradually disappearing and the rights of all are being established; but nature and chance will always keep up inequality among men by differently shaping them and their destinies. Education is becoming more and more general; but all the efforts of the schools are solely exerted to disseminate practical knowledge, not to propagate noble sentiments. Every one can now enter the lists of competition and every one's ambition is roused to activity; but modern aspirations chiefly aim at riches and display, and even the highest pursuits are only followed for their reward in gold. Ingenious machinery is producing with ease and rapidity immense quantities of necessities and luxuries, and the means of communication are multiplied and facilitated; but life is becoming more and more agitated, complicated, artificial—

## M E D I T A T I O N S

and thus less and less accessible to happiness which loves quiet, simplicity, and naturalness.

. . .

**P**REJUDICE is groundless: it is a noxious plant that needs no soil to grow in; it thrives with its roots in the air.

. . .

**W**E must be above worldly cares; we must stand so high that the clouds of care sail under us.

. . .

**L**OVE, planted by nature in our heart, bears the most delicious fruit of happiness.

. . .

**A**NGER is attended with lack of power—for if we had the power to alter what displeases us, we should have no occasion to be angry. It is this chafing impotence that renders anger ridiculous.

. . .

**E**VEN when all sources feeding hope seem to be sealed, despair not. Many a river-bed in the torrid zone appears dry in the height of summer; yet, ere long, the waters will rush into it again.

. . .

**I**T would not do to analyze a soldier's courage, to ask how much of it is owing to strong nerves,

## M E D I T A T I O N S

to a good digestion, to love of fight or adventure, to worldly ambition—and how little of it to patriotism, to enthusiasm for the good cause. Let us rather be thankful to Providence that there are men to fight humanity's battles against wrong, oppression, and barbarity, and honor the men who are instrumental in conquering evil and making the good triumphant.

. . .

**C**OURAGE alone makes not a hero, but courage in a good cause. Satan is as courageous in the combat as the archangel.

. . .

**C**CHEERFULNESS is the bright-colored banner which the brave never strike in the battle of life. Destiny may baffle their hopes, thwart their plans, and destroy what they had built up, but it cannot make them lose courage and lower their banner in surrender.

. . .

**A**S, by the invention of glass, man succeeded in obtaining a substance that, while letting in the daylight into the house, keeps out the wind, rain, and snow, so by discovering and applying the right philosophy of life man may succeed in admitting all the sunshine into his heart and shutting out all the storms.

.

## MEDITATIONS

AS the tiller of the soil in the fall of the year, after having plowed, sown, and harvested, after all the toil and care, hopes fulfilled and frustrated, takes a deep breath of relief looking forward to the repose of winter, so we take a deep breath of relief in the late autumn of life, after all our striving and struggling, wishing and longing, our victories and defeats—looking gladly forward to the quiet of coming old age, to the quiet gradually merging into eternal rest.

...

WHEN happening to read in advanced age what we have written long, long ago in the days of our youth, a strange feeling comes over us. We hear our own voice out of the silent past, but we recognize it no more. "Is it possible," we ask ourselves, "that *we* have written this! that we have expressed these views!" Involuntarily we make a comparison between our present and our former self, and, all of a sudden, the writing appears to be a kind of letter written by us to ourselves, by our youth to our advanced age, asking us sternly, "In whose favor results the comparison? and, if in favor of our present self, is the progress in proportion to the length of the interval?"

...

THE poor exile! there are warm hearts beating for him, but they are so far away. He feels like one enveloped in darkness looking up to the

## M E D I T A T I O N S

host of glittering stars—all too far away to give him light.

...

**W**HEN winter covers the earth with snow, the poor birds who rather starve than emigrate are badly off. Then the good housewife, knowing what love of home is, strews crumbs on the window-sill for the martyrs of love-of-home—who come and appease their hunger thankfully.

...

**T**HE throes of birth are not the sharpest pain that children give their mothers.

...

**T**HE closeness of their particles makes rocks and metals firm; the close attachment of their members makes the state and the family strong.

...

**P**EOPLE of one country, of one family, of one religion are by far not so closely related as people of like sentiments, like mind, like character.

...

**E**VEN if the home of the first man and woman had been no paradise, they would have felt their banishment from it just as painfully.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**O**UR fatherland is the dearest land to us, even though the world may offer freer, more enlightened and more beautiful countries. We *love* our country—and love is not the result of reasoning, but an absorbing, indisputable feeling.

· · ·

**I**T is a recommendation to descend from a good family, just as it recommends goods to come from a renowned house; those who are judges, however, will value goods according to quality and men according to character and capacities.

· · ·

**I**T is good to live in a country blessed with sunshine and beauty; it is better still to have a home blessed with love and cheerfulness.

· · ·

**T**O be free and to continue free, a people must be capable of self-government and an individual of self-control.

· · ·

**M**EN will call themselves free even though confined, maybe, in the dark dungeon of ignorance, bound with the fetters of vice and lashed by their passions. Does freedom merely imply not being the slave of another?

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**L**IBERTY brings up free sons; despotism rears low slaves. Liberty can count on her children's love; despotism may be sure of the slaves' ill-concealed hate.

. . .

**T**HE despot of a down-trodden people is but an extensive slaveholder; the head of a free nation is like the beloved father of a numerous family.

. . .

**A**S frost turns flowing water into inert ice, so does the icy breath of despotism check the course of human activity—and as genial warmth makes the ice-bound river flow, so does the sun of liberty set all the energies of the people in motion.

. . .

**I**F a tree is transplanted, and be it with the greatest care, some fibres will be hurt: thus it fares with man when exiled from his native land.

. . .

**A** FREE government puts under no restriction either tongue or pen—for from its friend, truth, it can only hear merited praise or just blame, good advice and wise precepts, and against its enemy, falsehood, it is ever ready to enter the lists. A despotic government allows neither freedom of speech nor press—for it cannot trust its friend, falsehood, and with its mortal enemy, truth, it avoids any contest.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**L**ET us not confine our love for liberty to outward political freedom, but extend it to inward freedom from folly and vice—those tyrants worse than any king or nobles could be, and to carry whose yoke is most disgraceful and debasing.

...

**A** DESPOTIC government falsifies the history of the country—like an individual who gives an untrue account of his life, if certain incidents in it do him no honor.

...

**S**TRIVE rather to lessen your cares than to increase your riches; rather to be independent yourself than to rule over others.

...

**I**N governing ourselves, the legislative authority belongs as naturally to the mind, as the executive to the body.

...

**T**HE sharper our ear becomes in hearing the voice of conscience, the more zeal our conscience shows in exhorting us; and the readier our heart becomes to follow the commands of conscience, the more keenly our conscience distinguishes good from evil. The more our conscience perfects us, the more we perfect our conscience.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**F**OR the good of humanity, mental capacity is generally attended with mental activity—so that most mines of the intellect are being worked.

· · ·

**T**O render the world better, happier, and more beautiful, God appoints man His agent; to render the world corrupt, miserable, and odious, the devil appoints the same agent. It is for man to choose the master he will serve.

· · ·

**L**ET not the pursuit of our own interests make us unmindful of those of others, nor our attachment to our family make us forget our duty to our country, nor our patriotism make us disregard the cause of humanity.

· · ·

**W**HEN your neighbor wrongs or insults you, your character is tested. Are you going to retaliate and be his equal, or will you return good for evil and kindness for rudeness and prove his superior?

· · ·

**I**T requires a great amount of moral strength to confess a weakness.

· · ·

**G**REATNESS is attended with martyrdom. The great cherish the ideal of perfection, and, comparing with it actual human nature and human

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conditions, they cannot but see a multitude of imperfections—which, prompted by love to mankind and by enthusiasm for whatever is good, true, and right, they try to reform. As, however, humanity see not their own failings and like not to be found fault with, they doubt the reformer's good sense and good intentions, and return mockery for self-sacrificing enthusiasm, and hate for heaven-inspired love.

...

**B**Y discussing the shortcomings of others, we imply that we believe ourselves free from those faults and from any others equally bad—which is either presumption, or, at best, self-praise.

...

**L**ET your device be: to uphold, not to pull down; to pity, not to deride; to gladden, not to grieve; to protect, not to pursue; to guide, not to mislead; to soothe, not to irritate; to reconcile, not to estrange; to help, not to harm; to console, not to mortify; to befriend, not to repulse; to contribute to the grand harmony of the universe, not to impair it.

...

**T**HE thoughtless but good-natured are indulgent to themselves and others; God and men, therefore, are also indulgent to them. The wicked and hypocritical are indulgent to themselves, but strict with others; they find, therefore, no favor either in

## M E D I T A T I O N S

the eyes of God or men. The just but cold-hearted are severe against themselves and others; they deserve, therefore, recompense and esteem rather than love. The pure and humane are severe against themselves and indulgent to others; God and men love them.

∴

**I**F we appreciate the kindness of man and the beauty of nature; if we bear our sorrows in silence and let our friends partake of our joys; if we have a cheerful look and a friendly word for every one; if we are always ready to enter into the thoughts and feeling of others; if we like rather to listen than to speak, rather to give than to take, rather to show our acknowledgment of others than to call attention to ourselves; if we are very careful not to offend and ready to forgive an offence; if we are uniformly polite to all people in all their moods—then we are worthy of being loved; and to be loved by men is, next to finding favor in the eyes of God, the highest aim.

∴

**G**REAT minds never feel quite at home on earth—for the earth is mostly not inhabited by their kind. This feeling of loneliness engenders in them a longing for a more congenial, more perfect home. Then fancy comes to their aid and depicts that home; and hope promises it to them. This is the genesis of Heaven and immortality in the breast of mortal man.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**T is by showing forbearance when impatience is expected, by saying a friendly word when anger is anticipated, that we win the hearts of men.

...

**T**HERE is more civility in attentive listening than in polite words.

...

**I**F we swerve not from the path of duty and gain our self-respect, if we learn to think and can commune with ourselves, we acquire a good and agreeable companion in ourselves, and become less dependent on the society of others.

...

**S**OME people seem to imagine that the more talk they monopolize, the greater their social talents.

...

**W**E cannot always acquire the acknowledgment of the world, but certainly our own.

...

**W**E often give the name of fortune or misfortune to the offspring of our own actions.

...

**A**S nature arms a thistle with a hundred thorns, while it leaves many a noble plant unprotected, so destiny often gives riches and power, the means

## M E D I T A T I O N S

of defence against many hardships, to the vulgar, while it exposes the generous to the rough handling of the world.

· · ·

**F**ATE has two temporary remedies for discontent: either it fulfils our wishes, or it renders our condition for a time so much worse that we hail with joy the return of the circumstances at which we had murmured. Of the former remedy it makes use very rarely; of the latter too often.

· · ·

**I**N the earliest ages men began trying to read in the unrolled scroll of the starry heavens. For thousands of years they had been spelling out the golden letters on the blue ground before they could fluently read and decipher the meaning.

· · ·

**A**S the greatest part of the heavenly bodies would revolve in darkness if they did not receive their light from suns, so would the greatest part of humanity walk in darkness if they did not receive their enlightenment from those intellectual suns who have a light of their own.

· · ·

**T**HE first-fruits of genius may be yet unripe; but there is no mistaking what *kind* of fruit it is.

## MEDITATIONS

**G**REAT men usually speak little, but are eloquent on occasion. Their lack of interest for trivial matters is often the cause of their being silent when others speak—while, at other times, their enthusiasm for everything that appeals to the head and heart fires their imagination and calls forth all their command of speech, when others, perhaps, have little to say.

· · ·

**H**OW great a share navigation has contributed to the fraternization of mankind! What an inspiration it was when the idea of constructing a vessel first occurred to man! What active apostles are our ships! What noble pride man may feel in being able to sail from shore to shore: to join together what God hath put asunder!

· · ·

**B**EAUTY, as well as goodness, is an attribute of God, and men have at all times as much extolled His glory when He revealed Himself to them in vision as they praised His goodness when He manifested Himself to them in His mercy. Thus *art worships God*—for it mainly springs from enthusiasm over the beauty of God's world, and influences mankind to share that feeling.

· · ·

**T**O be profound in one thing, we must learn many things. It is by many tributaries that the stream becomes deep.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

THE autumn of life brings forth the ripest fruit of the mind.

. . .

WHEN man discovered the infinitude of the universe, the whole structure of his previous ideas about God, man, and the world fell in ruins at his feet, a heap of pitiful fallacies. The earth he had taken to be the world turned into a grain of sand; himself, the ruler of that earth sank into insignificance, and the insolvable problem faced him: Where to find a place for the eternal Spirit in an infinite universe of matter?

. . .

ENDEAVORING to give full and exact expression to the highest thoughts and deepest feelings and searching for the right words all through the province of the language—great writers arrive now and then at the very confines of that province without finding what they are looking for. Then they go beyond the old limits and, making new discoveries, extend the domain of the language.

. . .

THE man of science is inclined to look down on the poet—as the cultivator of extensive fields is apt to look down on him who lovingly tends a few flowers.

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**I**NSTEAD of reading books indiscriminately, read those which are unanimously recommended by all capable of judging. Who would trust strangers rather than men of highest repute? Who would look for chance acquaintances and leave his letters of introduction undelivered?

. . .

**A**RT speaks a language unlike any other. It speaks not in words, but in form, color, and sound. Only very few understand this language fully.

. . .

**O**LD and feeble we walk slowly through a wintry landscape. Winter around us, winter within us; snow on the ground, the snows of old age on our bent head. Suddenly a dear old melody, cherished in our young days, strikes our ear. We stop and listen, and, behold! our youth rises from the grave, our vigorous, energetic, restless youth, longing for love and pleasure and glory. We are young again, and it is perpetual spring. All around us innumerable buds, bathing in the sunlight, break into blossoms of resplendent colors and waft sweet fragrance through the mild air. The earth unrolls her green carpet for us to walk on; the sky spans its blue vault as a triumphal arch over our head. We are heroes again in our strength and daring; rich again in our health and bloom; happy again in the love we feel and the love we inspire. . . . Suddenly the dear old melody ceases. Youth disappears. Old

## M E D I T A T I O N S

and feeble we walk slowly on through the wintry landscape.

· · ·

**L**END assistance to youth; lend assistance to old age. Help all that are not strong yet; help all that are not strong any more.

· · ·

**T**HE Bible—that old, venerable stronghold of religion and humanity, morals, and ceremonial, laws and customs, wisdom and sentiment, history and legend, proverb and parable, prayer and song—which has defied all-destroying time for so many ages, which is overgrown with poetry as with ivy—let us revere it!

· · ·

**W**HAT does the Paradise story teach us? That the world would be a paradise, if man never disobeyed the laws of nature which are the voice of God; that among all living beings, man alone is weighed down by being destined to die—for, through his understanding, he is conscious of death in life; that the venomous tongue of the tempter, insinuating and persuasive, is often the agent in marring our purity and destroying our peace; that if the man listens to the woman who listens to the evil spirit, he and she will have to bid farewell to happiness.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**W**HEN, starting from Shinar, mankind began spreading over the earth, it was the commencement of men separating into nations. When, starting from Palestine, the teaching of brotherly love began its triumphal march through the world, it was the commencement of nations re-uniting as men.

...

**T**HE Sabbath has not been instituted to enforce inactivity on the independent, but to grant a day of rest to the dependent.

...

**M**OST people find that the commandment, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," demands more than the human heart is capable of, and yet, as enmity and hatred, the propensity to insult, ill-treat, and persecute—take from us life's joy and happiness, this commandment actually means: give from your wealth of love and peacefulness to the poor who carry enmity in their heart and curses on their lips; have pity with the unfortunate whose feelings, words, and deeds are tainted with hate, insult, and persecution.

...

**A** MAN whose ideal is perfection serves the true God, for God is but another name for perfection. When Moses said, "Ye shall be holy, for

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I the Lord your God am holy," he set up the highest ideal for all ages.

. . .

**W**E need the clouds as well as the sunshine; we need the dark days of grief and care as well as the bright days of joy and hope. The clouds bring us the fruitful rain, and the dark days are favorable to the growth of character.

. . .

**S**UFFERING improves the heart, and good fruit grows in the soil ploughed by sharp pain and watered by tears.

. . .

**T**HE noblest hearts, the greatest benefactors of mankind had to drain the cup of sorrow, which rendered their hearts all the nobler and increased their zeal for doing good—for much of the sweetness of compassion and charity is distilled from the bitter draught of sorrow.

. . .

**S**ORROW and care, want and privation, loneliness and sickness, dependence and humiliation make up the bitter medicine by which the heart is cured of conceit and pride and indifference to the world's woes.

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**L**IFE'S dark hours disclose to the mind's eye sublime heights unseen in the bright light of happiness—as night reveals a thousand worlds invisible by day.

. . .

**F**IRST Asia, the eldest daughter, rose out of the sea—and God, the Father, blessed her and said: “Thou shalt be the first to know me, my attributes and my will.” Then America, the second-born, lifted her head above the blue waters, and the Father blessed her and said: “Thou shalt be the first to proclaim the equality of all men.” Africa, the third-born, then appeared above the surface of the ocean. “Thou shalt be the first,” her Father said, “to discover by cultivation the full fertility of the earth.” Next Europe emerged from the waves. “Thou shalt be the first,” her Father said, “to carry science and philosophy, art and literature to a high degree of excellence.” Last, Australia sprang from the ocean's lap, and the Father blessed her too. What, however, the blessing was, future generations will tell.

. . .

**A** NATION is influenced by neighboring nations, as an individual is by close companions.

. . .

**T**HE epitaphs of the great dead which history writes, like epitaphs in general, are more or less in accordance with truth, and many of them are more or less effaced.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

SOME historians have the magic power to resuscitate the dead past; others can only coffin it in their books like a mummy.

. . .

THERE was a time in history when religion was the centre of all life and movement, thought, and interest. That period was symbolically represented by the church steeples in the centres of the cities around which the houses were grouped. In our own times the tall factory chimneys towering above the surrounding buildings are the fit symbol of our industrial age.

. . .

THOUGH many a period in history be like a dark night, some great names shine, like stars, therein.

. . .

THE desertion of the very champions of right and truth is more fatal to the good cause than all the attacks of its enemies.

. . .

HISTORY is the diary of humanity. When the pen drops from the dead hand of one generation, the following generation takes it up and continues writing the wondrous tale.

## M E D I T A T I O N

**H**ISTORY tells us by what experiences and at what cost humanity has acquired the little wisdom it possesses.

. . .

**T**HE same nation may be entirely different at different periods of its existence—for nations, like individuals, have to pass through helpless, unconscious childhood; ignorant, combative boyhood; inexperienced, impassioned youth — before they arrive at maturity. A nation now free may, in the past, have allowed itself to be enslaved by tyrants. A nation now peaceable may once have been in the habit of remorselessly invading the neighboring countries. A nation now enlightened may, in former times, have condemned the pure-hearted and noble-minded to a cruel death for being dissenters.

. . .

**T**HE destiny of a people, like that of an individual, is not entirely determined by merit.

. . .

**A** PEOPLE hears the voice of its conscience out of the mouth of its great men—and as there is no individual who never outraged his conscience, so there is no people that never did violence to its prophets, reformers, and teachers.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**F**IRST appears in the world the beautiful blossom: the noble thought; then develops from it the fruit: the great deed.

. . .

**H**UMANITY found its tyrants first in the priesthood, then in the military order; now it finds them more and more in the commercial class.

. . .

**A** NATION must not resent being criticised, nor take all praise as their due. Let censure stimulate them to distinguish themselves in those qualities in which they had been found lacking, and let praise lead them to self-examination, to ask themselves whether they had really deserved that praise.

. . .

**A** NATION must guard against conceit—for conceit in a nation, as in an individual, impedes progress.

. . .

**J**UST as a father demands from his child not frequent protestations of love, but constant good behavior, so our heavenly Father requires from us not daily praises, but the leading of a good life.

. . .

**A**PPRECIATE life, the gift of God, and render thanks to the Giver; appreciate the world in which God has placed you and render thanks to the

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Creator. Petition not the Lord continually, nor praise constantly the things you are expecting from Him. Good children receive joyfully and thankfully what their father gives them; but claim nothing, ask nothing, speak not of what they expect, remind not of what they had been promised.

· · ·

**T**HE greatest blessings and the greatest afflictions God sends to men through men.

· · ·

**A**S the sun mirrors itself in the smallest brooklet while at the same time it enlightens the world, so Providence looks into every individual heart while at the same time He surveys the universe.

· · ·

**G**OD created man in His own image, and every man creates his God in his own image.

· · ·

**G**OD reveals Himself *in* man. Understanding, feeling, and conscience, the love of right and truth, the sense of beauty and harmony—are so many revelations of God.

· · ·

**F**OLLY sees not that we cannot do anything for God Himself; that we can acquire His love and show our love to Him only by what we do for man—

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and wickedness chooses not to serve God by leading a pure life and doing good deeds which demand curbing the passions and overcoming selfishness, but prefers performing ceremonies which require no sacrifice.

• •

**G**IVING is the joy of God. The more we rejoice in giving, the more we are like Him.

• •

**M**AN stands on earth and reaches toward heaven. The divine and the human meet in him. The earth is his mother, but he is also God's son. Every man is a demi-god.

• •

**H**E who has to live in the midst of the noise and turmoil of the world and can only now and then resort to solitude for recreation, is inclined to have an exaggerated idea of the delights of retirement and to think he could easily dispense with society. He who has to live too much alone and can only at rare intervals enjoy the pleasure of society, is apt to form too high an opinion of the joys of human intercourse and to imagine it more indispensable than it is. God has meant us to have both, communion with ourselves and with our fellow-men; and we are to enjoy one and the other in due proportion.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**E**NJOY the good there is in men and things around you, and allow not the evil in them to harm you—as you keep in the warmth of the hearth and keep out the smoke.

• • •

**T**HERE are people who, to find favor in the eyes of men, give to the Lord a small part of what they have amassed by the aid of the devil.

• • •

**A**LL that we say must be true; but we must not say all that is true. We must not believe all that we hear, nor repeat all that we believe.

• • •

**O**UR good qualities will never be acknowledged unless we give people time to find them out themselves.

• • •

**T**HERE is something unnatural, laughable about the movements of the upstart in high society. He walks not, as it were, on his own feet; he struts along on the stilts of his riches.

• • •

**G**OOD society steers conversation so skilfully that it keeps aloof from the vulgar, silly, vain, and malicious—those fatal rocks against which conversation is apt to strike.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

JUDGE not rashly of men and things: judge not of the moon by *one* of her phases.

...

IT is not that we have much to say which proves our social talents, but that people have much to say to us.

...

WE find in general society more artificial than natural pleasure; more noise than harmony; more talk than sense; more politeness than goodwill; more smiles than affection.

...

THE unguarded tongue is like an unsheathed sword that may at any moment wound its own master.

...

HAPPINESS is the goal we all pursue, consciously or unconsciously, and however different the paths we take through life may be—nay, not satisfied with transitory happiness ending with life, we call faith to our aid and perpetuate it through all eternity under the name of salvation.

...

IF we are well and do right, have our daily bread and no master over us, we possess the principal conditions of happiness.

## MEDITATIONS

**H**APPINESS rests in a great measure on simplicity: on plain living, plain speaking, plain dealing. Plain living leads to better health, fewer cares, and more leisure. Plain speaking, the offspring of truth, and plain dealing, the offspring of right, give us inward peace

. . .

**W**E are unhappiest if fate so wills it that the people with whom and among whom we pass our life have little in common with us; that the things surrounding us daily are neither of our choice nor to our taste; that our activity represents not what we can do best and love to do most, but what we have to do to sustain life.

. . .

**E**DUCATION has the task to strengthen the body, enlighten the mind, and ennoble the heart. A school that attends not to this three-fold task is incomplete.

. . .

**W**HEN God had created the trees, the evergreens alone were content, all the others were not. Some found fault with their size, some with their shape, others with their leaves or their bark. The Lord then said: "If I fulfil their wishes now, they will soon find some other reason for complaint—for there is no satisfying a discontented nature.

## MEDITATIONS

I shall have to make them suffer privation, that they may learn appreciation; to give them pain, that they may know joy." And He sent forth the cold and the wind, and they despoiled all the discontented trees of their leaves. Then the bare, unhappy trees began moaning and wailing and crying: "Oh, what a misfortune! Oh, what a loss! Our leaves, our dear leaves, our beautiful leaves—gone, all gone! Will they ever return to us? Oh, if they would only come back! We should be so happy; we would never complain any more. But alas, we shall never see them again—never!" The autumn passed by, the winter ran its course, but the leaves returned not, and the bereaved trees became sadder and sadder, losing all hope. However, when the spring came, the trees noticed with thrills of joy little leaves being born unto them, which grew and grew and developed into full-sized leaves, just like the old ones they had known so well, but which now appeared to them of matchless beauty and without blemish. Ever since that time they have to lose their leaves in autumn, as a reminder of their former sinful discontent.

...

**C**HILDREN that take pleasure in disturbing, annoying, tormenting, destroying are worse than uneducated. Not only has nothing been done to make them humane, but diabolical inclinations have been allowed to take root and grow in their hearts—for it is the devil's distinctive mark to rejoice in doing harm and causing pain.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

THE principal rules for educating children and governing a people are the same, and the schoolmaster and the statesman are more closely related than people generally imagine.

. . .

THE brains went school-inspecting and they were satisfied. The heart went school-inspecting and it sighed: "Letters, figures, dates, localities—is there nothing for *me*? What are men thinking of in not considering me in the bringing up of their children? How can they fail to understand that, if humanity is to aspire after the highest ideals, I must be the very centre of education?"

. . .

YOUR little children are dependent on you; all they are and have is owing to you, and they must be aware of it, if they are to be willingly guided by you. The moment your unreasonableness and vanity give them a certain power over you, they may use it for harm—for in the hands of a child power is as dangerous as a sharp-edged instrument.

. . .

CHILDREN love to busy themselves, to help, to be important; make use of these inclinations. Accustom them early to work and to useful work, without which there is no happiness in life.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

THE qualities which urge and enable men to acquire wealth and position, and those which give them the aspiration and capacity for nobler achievements, are seldom found together. The rich and powerful lack too often in nobility of soul, and generous minds are too often without means or power. Those that *could* do good are mostly unwilling, and those that *long* to do good are mostly unable.

. . .

AS long as there is want among men, prodigality is not only folly and display not merely vanity—they are cruel monsters that devour what might feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, heal the sick, and comfort the disconsolate.

. . .

THE wise are seldom rich; the shrewd are seldom poor.

. . .

IF the dissatisfied poor would put to good use the time they spend in arguing against the rich, they could really better their position and do it independently.

. . .

BY studying foreign languages we understand better our own, although the knowledge of many languages may somewhat obstruct the fluency of our speech in each. The richer we are in thoughts, the more material we have for communication, although

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the very abundance of ideas, all pressing forward to find expression, may somewhat hinder us from expressing every single idea with due care.

. . .

**D**IFFERENCE of language separates men from one another—thus the cultivation of languages contributes to the unification of mankind.

. . .

**I**N an English or French sentence the words are strung in a row, like a string of pearls; in a German sentence they are artistically interwoven, like threads in a fine tissue. In the former there is more simplicity, clearness, and practical spirit; in the latter more art and combination. In the former is reflected the character of an active, matter-of-fact people, busy with political and social questions; in the latter that of a meditative and philosophical people, inclined to metaphysical abstractions.

. . .

**F**REE yourself from your fictitious wants; you can easily acquire enough to satisfy your real needs.

. . .

**W**HEN the Germanic tribes had become imbued with Christianity, Gothic architecture was born. It was the offspring of daring strength wedded to high-soaring spirituality.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**O be a good observer we must be logical, imaginative, and experienced alike—for most things do not present themselves to our observation all at once in their entirety, but a little at a time. Thus it is only by logical inference and by experience that we are able to know the parts that constitute the whole, and to put them together; and it is only by imaginative power that we can guess at the missing parts.

. . .

**D**ISDAIN not polite forms as unbecoming a straightforward nature—for politeness is not weakening moral strength, but adorning it; just as sculpture makes not a column less strong, but more graceful.

. . .

**A**S a rule, people are less inclined to be silent than to speak and least inclined to listen.

. . .

**W**HEN we live too much in society we often have to talk merely for the sake of talking—then it becomes difficult to avoid vanity, folly, untruth, and calumny.

. . .

**T**HE bright light of the present allows us not to see our great contemporaries, the stars in our intellectual firmament. It is only posterity that will see them shining in the dark night of the past and know their relative size and brilliancy.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE great men that lived in unenlightened times, among uncultured people, are particularly appreciated—like palms in the treeless waste; like water-springs in the arid desert.

· · ·

**T**HE great and noble mind is, like the sun, surrounded with light. It enlightens the intellects and warms the hearts of all that move in its sphere.

· · ·

**T**HE inmost space of the heart is a sanctuary, inaccessible to any one.

· · ·

**T**HE higher the standpoint of our mind, the more comprehensive, naturally, its view.

· · ·

**T**HERE are on this earth more flighty and unreliable than firm and trustworthy characters—just as there is more unstable water than solid land.

· · ·

**M**AN is complete when combining an intelligent head with a good heart.

· · ·

**M**UCH more is done for the cultivation of the mind than of the heart; yet there are fewer logically thinking heads than tenderly feeling hearts.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**T requires a particularly sharp eye to explore the miniature world in the human breast.

· · ·

**T**HE weak or sickly mind has no taste for strong nourishment.

· · ·

**T**HE lofty mind continues bright even when the sun of life has sunk low—like the high mountain on which the light lingers at sunset.

· · ·

**A**S man has been trying again and again to invent artificial wings by which to rise bodily above the earth—so he has always been striving to detach himself mentally from earth and soar heavenward on the wings of fancy. Nothing is more touching than this irrepressible human impulse, these indefatigable human attempts to rise aloft—despite the repeated failures, the frequent downfalls, the heaviness of the body tugging incessantly at the mind, the insurmountable difficulty for the earth-born to stay away long from earth.

· · ·

**E**VEN if the saving of your soul is your aim in life, you are selfish. To lead a pure, good, useful life must be your object; let the salvation of your soul be one of its consequences.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**E**QUALLY distant from the two extremes—from the torpid regions of cold-heartedness and indifference on one side, and from the torrid zone of the burning passions on the other—in the beautiful temperate land, virtue and wisdom have taken up their abode.

· · ·

**E**VEN hypocrites are doing homage to virtue by trying to pass for virtuous.

· · ·

**A** LIBRARY arranged and catalogued according to the size and cover of the books would greatly resemble our classification of society.

· · ·

**B**E not hasty in your decision, which are the givers and which the receivers among men. At the mouth of a river it looks as if the sea was receiving and the river giving—yet the river only returns what the sea had given long ago.

· · ·

**H**UMOR laughs softly, but cordially; it sheds silent tears, but they come from the heart. It sees the sublime and the ridiculous, the noble and the mean in all their gradations and combinations. It perceives not only part of the world at a time, but all parts at the same time. Therefore humor is not understood by many—for its gentle laugh is

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easily overheard and its silent tear easily overlooked; the innumerable nicely shaded colors with which it paints the world in its inexhaustible variety are hard to distinguish and easily confounded. Therefore humor's sudden transitions—for it sees a tragic element in the comical, and a comic element in the tragical. Therefore it is seemingly inconsistent, inharmonious, fragmentary—as the world itself seems to be, if viewed in parts and not as a whole.

. . .

**T**HERE are people who cannot keep a secret, but have to confide it to some one whom they expect to keep it. This is one of those rare instances when people have a better opinion of their fellow-men than they have of themselves.

. . .

**I**F you find fault with the world as it is and hint at the desirability of a reform, people will unconsciously resent it—for they are part of the world which you find unsatisfactory. Their resentment will generally take shape in the thought or outcry: "What! the world is not good enough for him! Probably he is not good enough for the world."

. . .

**T**O her favorites Fortune gives a kind of compass which guides them on their voyage through life. The less fortunate, sailing on life's stormy sea, can only consult the sun and stars which frequently

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withdraw their light—but the ways of Heaven become clearer to those who have to look upward.

· · ·

**W**HEN misfortune comes over us, and we lie helpless, bleeding from deep wounds, it is the signal for many to pounce upon us like birds of prey. All the nobler is then the conduct of a few who, upholding the honor of humanity, hasten to our help, trying to heal our wounds and to keep away the preying multitude.

· · ·

**T**HE statesman is only the helmsman, the captain of the ship of state—and yet, if successful, he is adored, as if, godlike, he had supreme command over weather and waves; and, if unsuccessful, he is made answerable for tempest and cliffs.

· · ·

**P**EOPLE will much rather ask your pardon if you overlook a slight than if you resent it—for they do not mind nearly so much confessing their wrongdoing as being taken to task for it.

· · ·

**B**Y its perfect disinterestedness true friendship stands nearer to Heaven than love itself.

· · ·

**F**AITHFUL friendship is a rare, inestimable gem that makes its possessor rich.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**O**F all virtues faithfulness is most heavenly.  
Unlike anything here below, it is not subject to change.

...

**N**ATURES entirely unlike may be united in friendship as different sounds unite in harmony.

...

**L**OVE and friendship, like faith, must stand many a test to prove true.

...

**H**UNTING for pleasure in company is often called friendship.

...

**M**OST children of man have never beheld the shining face of Heaven's daughter, Love. What they call by that name is only earthly, short-lived Passion.

...

**W**HETHER we have attained our ideal of love, are still in pursuit of it, or have renounced it—we may enjoy happiness. It is only when, yielding to the temptation of interest, we have exchanged the high ideal for a low reality, that we must bid farewell to happiness.

...

**L**OVE most sublime is love to God; next to it is love to mankind; then follows half-heavenly, half-earthly love. That the last has been made the

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subject of most poems proves not that it is the highest theme of poetry, but that most poets can only rise to that height.

. . .

**L**OVE contains an ingredient of selfishness; but, at the same time, engenders the greatest self-denial. It is the bait with which nature allures us; but, at the same time, it is sent from heaven to earth to bring the greatest joy into life.

. . .

**L**OVE, however true and pure, has an earthly element. It is the consciousness thereof that makes lovers embarrassed.

. . .

**L**OVE is life's centre, life's light and warmth, life's sun. Seek to acquire love; it will give you light in the darkness of adversity, and warmth in the winter of life.

. . .

**H**AVING acquired love, we must daily endeavor to keep it—for love, like life, must be sustained by nourishment, or it sickens and dies.

. . .

**E**VEN the most prosaic, to whom love is a subject for ridicule, would be unhappy if no spark of love warmed their heart. They would know it themselves if they understood their own nature and their own life.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**P**ATIENCE, courage, hope, and submission to a higher will break the serried lines of troubles in the battle of life. Were there, however, no love to beautify life and glorify our dreams of heaven, patience, courage, hope, and even faith would fail us.

· · ·

**I**T requires a great deal of experience to speak and behave in such a manner that people should not form a worse opinion of us than we deserve.

· · ·

**W**ITH eager longing the human heart, like the flame, tends heavenward. In vain does the cold breath of reason try to keep it down.

· · ·

**T**HE spiritual is more powerful than the material, and yet the struggle between the two will never cease—for as often as matter is overthrown, it draws new strength from its mother earth, and stands ready again to resume the strife.

· · ·

**I**N the course of history mankind have tried not only all possible ways in which a people might be governed, but also all conceivable methods according to which an individual is to govern himself. They have ascended and descended the whole scale: up to the absolutism of the mind

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and disfranchisement of the body, and down to the despotism of the body and bondage of the mind.

. . .

AS mind and body must live together on earth, let their relations be friendly—based on a mutual understanding, on knowing and respecting each other's rights, on the desire of both to contribute to one another's perfection and happiness.

. . .

YOUTH naturally thinks only of pleasure, joy, and happiness: of the *beauty* of life—for youth is life's spring, life's flowering-time. Manhood must think of helpful activity, the good of others: the *usefulness* of life—for from ripe manhood, from the autumn of life, we expect fruit.

. . .

IN youth our thirst for pleasure, our fondness of companionship and our longing for praise; our ambitions, passions, and desires innumerable—prompt us to form more and more connections with men and the world. In maturer age our inclination to quiet and our love of independence cause us to retire more and more within the circle of home and our own thoughts. In youth we are like a river overflowing its banks: we spread, we cover much space and are shallow withal. In maturer age we are like a river returning to its natural bed, and gain in depth what we lose in width.

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**P**ROUD youth looks down on old age, as the rich do on the poor—for nearly all the treasures of life are yet at youth's disposal, while poor old age has but a little remnant left.

· · ·

**T**HE more we advance in years the less passionately we perform our own part on the world's stage, and the more attentive we become to the performance of others.

· · ·

**W**HAT matters it if age ploughs furrows in our face and heaps the snows of life's winter on our head; if the light of our eyes, like the light of day toward sunset, diminishes toward the evening of life; if time breaks gaps in the rows of our teeth, as does the strong enemy in the walls of a besieged city; if our shoulders are bent by the burden of life, our feet sore with the long journey and our hands shaking with the chills of old age! As long as our mind is bright and our heart warm, we are still surpassingly rich in life's blessings, and our bodily infirmities are only the tithe we have to pay from our abundance.

· · ·

**Y**OUTH is the debtor of old age for the knowledge based on experience, and must pay the debt by due respect.

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**I**N youth our home seems too narrow, and we feel drawn abroad; our country seems too small, and we are attracted by the wide world; our friends seem too few, and we want to increase their number; the attention people give us seems too slight, and we long to create sensation. In old age we love best our familiar corner at home, our birthplace—the scene of our earliest recollections—our few faithful friends, our tranquillity of mind undisturbed by the crowd.

. . .

**H**E who combines an active mind with a pure heart and childlike simplicity never grows old: he has discovered the magic fountain of perpetual youth.

. . .

**T**HE best means to defy time and keep young in old age is to counterbalance physical retrogression by intellectual and ethical progress.

. . .

**W**HEN young, when our own understanding is not yet fully developed either by years or experience, we believe humanity to be ruled by reason. When, however, our understanding has reached maturity, and our inferences are drawn more logically and supported by long experience, we find that humanity is much less swayed by reason than by emotions, impulses, fancies, whims; by chance happenings, chance actions, even chance words.

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**W**HEN young, when we have little to communicate and much to learn, we are, strange to say, very fond of speaking and little inclined to listen. When old, when we have much more to impart and need less information from others, we talk less and listen more.

∴

**W**E play with toys not only in childhood, but all through life. If our playthings become larger, they are no less trifling—and if our faces assume a more serious expression, the play is not more important.

∴

**I**N honoring old age we express our reverence for certain virtues and mental qualities which are or should be found in old age.

∴

**T**HE storms of adversity have a different effect upon us according to the time of life in which they assail us: whether in youth, in maturer years, or in old age. The winds in spring, however rough, affect us but little—for, after all, they strew blossoms about us and, if they scatter the clouds for a moment, the warm sun smiles down upon us. How different is our mood when the autumn wind is tearing down the leaves and whirling them all around us—or when the winter's storm, benumbing, cruel, and deadly, is drifting the blinding snow in our faces!

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**W**HAT is left to us in old age of all the splendors of youth? A few recollections that cling to us like the dry leaves to the oak in winter. When emotions sweep through our old heart those dry leaves begin to rustle and they whisper to us half-forgotten, bitter-sweet recollections of buds and blossoms, green foliage, and golden fruit; of sun-rays, mild breezes, and cloudless skies; of the beautiful days that are forever past.

...

**A** CHILD is happy in its innocence; a man can be so only through his virtue. A child is happy in paradisian peace; a man can be so only by doing battle and tasting the delights of victory. A child is happy in its sweet dreams; a man can be so only by aspiring to realize his dreams.

...

**I**N the middle of man's lifetime, as in the centre of all matter, the power of attraction is concentrated. It attracts us before we have reached it, and we approach it with joy; it attracts us after we have passed it, and we look back to it with regret.

...

**A**FTER having reached a certain age we begin noticing very clearly how the ranks of our generation have thinned. We had begun to fight the battle of life in serried ranks; but now we see

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only a few of our old comrades left, all standing isolated here and there in the field, like ourselves.

...

**I**F superstition and prejudice would indicate only immaturity of the mind, but, on the other hand, be accompanied by child-like innocence; nay, even if they were the symptoms of a harmless imbecility, we might look at their pranks with a smile or pass them by with indifference. But, as history and our own experience teach us, they have often, in insane paroxysms, stained their hands with innocent blood—and, therefore, every endeavor to dispel them by spreading enlightenment is holy work.

...

**I**GNORANCE and conceit keep people within a walled-in, narrow circle in the centre of which is their petty self. A step or two from the centre and there is the wall—and they recede to self. It is a miserable prison, but the prisoners know it not. Like captive animals they walk round and round in their cage; but, unlike them, they are content, never shaking at the bars.

...

**C**ONSIDER in what condition man has found the world and what his activity has made of it. Then you will feel it your duty to contribute your part toward making the world better and more beautiful, and you will be proud if able to do more than your share.

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**T**HAT we should work is the condition on which nature has given us life and is giving us health.

. . .

**P**RESERVE and improve your health in body, mind, and heart by constant exercise. Exercise your body by useful work, your mind by reflection and study, and your heart by generous actions.

. . .

**L**EARN to be active without moving hand, foot, or mouth: learn to *think*.

. . .

**I**F human industry would apply itself only to the production of what is useful, all would have the necessities of life and the leisure indispensable to comfort and happiness; but humanity is overworked and in want because so much of their energy is spent in producing what is useless and even harmful.

. . .

**O**WING to liberty, equality, religious toleration, common schools, extensive and rapid means of communication, all races and classes now commingle and, everything being attainable by all, every one's ambition is stimulated and every one is striving to advance. This commingling and general striving engenders a kind of fermentation, a constant restlessness which particularly characterizes modern humanity.

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**I**N order to live we must have the necessities of life, to procure which we must work; work is a condition of health, and health makes life desirable—this is the complete ring nature has formed.

..

**W**ORK is sweet; dependence makes it bitter.

..

**I**N despotically governed countries tyranny spreads from the throne down to the lowest subject, and servility spreads from the most abject serf up to the throne. Right is overruled by privilege and sold by corruption. The guilty can evade due punishment, while imprisonment, exile, and death impend over the noblest. Injustice, violence, and oppression, like wild beasts escaped from their cages, run about freely in the streets, and the people are deprived of all means of defence.

..

**B**Y respecting the liberty of others we show that we deserve our own.

..

**A**S we are justly restrained by our parents in our childhood, but gain our liberty when grown up—so may a people, when not yet developed, be restrained by their government, but gain their liberty when arrived at maturity. Freedom is the

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result of deserving to be free, and only those have a right to it who can be trusted not to abuse it.

· · ·

**T**O acquire the love of God by love to man is the soul of all religions. In regard to their soul they are all alike; only their forms differ.

· · ·

**T**HE starting- and meeting-point of all religions is love to God and man. *Love weds all religions.*

· · ·

**A** RELIGION that sets up false ideals is sure to be superseded by another. A religion that sets up attainable ideals may be superseded by another. A religion that sets up the ideal of perfection is eternal.

· · ·

**W**HAT is immortal in the ancient religions has been and will be preserved: what is mortal in the present religions will pass away in its time.

· · ·

**I**N every intermarriage between members of different denominations, the essential part of piety, which unites all religions, triumphs over the unessential part which separates them—and a further step is made toward the fraternization of all mankind.

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**T**HE divine in us makes us anticipate a future world where all is mercy, forgiveness, peace, and heavenly bliss. The human in us makes us transport our penal laws, necessary here below for our self-defence, human revenge and diabolical torture to Heaven full of love. The divine in us creates Paradise; the human in us creates Hell.

..

**H**OPE, consumed by the flames of death, rises again, phoenix-like, from its own ashes, to live on forever as Faith.

..

**L**IFE is short and full of trouble; the body is weak and mortal—yet, let our clergy, the interpreters of God's attributes and will, beware of detracting either life or body! for it is God who created both, as He did eternity and the soul, and he who detracts the thing made defames the Maker.

..

**L**IKE master, like man. From the clergy of each religion we can infer what kind of master they serve.

..

**T**HE saints die; but the holy words they have spoken, the holy acts they have done, live on. *These* are their relics that are working miracles.

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**F**AITH makes Hope eternal and Charity divine.

..

**T**HE standpoint of humanity is becoming higher and higher, and he who rises not with the rest is like a house remaining on the same old level after the street had been raised.

..

**I**N a very progressive country the ambition of the individual is greatly stimulated. Where so many advance, one is loath to remain behind.

..

**A**T the wonderful structure of civilization, forever building and never finished, millions are working, but the plans are designed by a very few.

..

**N**ONE so stupid or ignorant but what we may learn something from them, if we have much patience and little conceit.

..

**I**F you want to learn how to impress people favorably by your manners, observe closely the impression your looks and words make on young people and form yourself accordingly. Youth, not having yet strayed away from nature, is simple and

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sincere—and on the bright faces of the young you can clearly see the reflection of your personality.

. . .

THE organs of speech can articulate but a very limited number of sounds, and of these few sounds all the words in all the languages are composed. If humanity would agree on the letters which should represent these sounds, and each language would make use of as many letters as are necessary to express the sounds contained in it, the spelling of all languages would be then easy, logical, and uniform.

. . .

ALL spelling is naturally phonetic. When Cadmus invented letters he did not mean any letter to be silent, or any letter to have more than one sound, or two letters to have the same sound, or any sound to be expressed by more letters than one. English spelling disregards all this, is entirely anti-Cadmean, and can only be explained historically, that is, *it cannot be explained at all when taught*, the scholars being then too young to understand such an explanation. It wastes time, makes the mind less logical, and does not train the ear, as phonetic languages do, for music.

. . .

THE church-steeple pointing heavenward, a finger-post for the faithful pilgrims on their way through life, is befitting the house of prayer:

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but not so the churchyard—the graves of the dead surrounding the dwelling of the living God—not so any inscription on the church walls having reference to death. God is all life, and religion has only to do with life: life temporal and life eternal. If it so pleases God to lead us from life to eternity through the gate of death, it is not for religion to make us fix our eyes on the gate, but rather on eternity beyond it—not allowing the gate to obstruct the view.

· · ·

**F**AITH is perpetuated hope. As we entertain hope unbidden and uncertain of its fulfilment, so we cherish faith. Commandment is superfluous and demonstration impossible in reference to faith as in reference to hope.

· · ·

**F**ROM the same germ hidden in the human heart two wonderful flowers come forth, one perishable and the other eternal: Hope and Faith.

· · ·

**T**IME, his mortal children in his arms, is eternally circling round the year's ring, the four-striped, green, golden, brown, and white ring. Forever dropping some of his children and taking up others, he never stops running round the variegated ring. Beautiful is this ring! the green as well as the golden stripe, the brown as well as the white stripe, are

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equally beautiful—and it is glorious, borne along in the arms of time, to round the circle again and again; but when at last we are gently dropped on earth, it is just as well—for after all the travelling and sight-seeing, rest and sleep are welcome to our tired limbs and weary eyes.

· · ·

**T**HERE are cloudy days clearing up just at sunset. After a day of rain and storm the clouds scatter, and the last slanting sunrays illumine gloriously the whole scene before the darkness of night settles upon it. There are cloudy lives darkened by misfortune, disease, poverty, and humiliation—brightening up just when the sun of life is sinking.

· · ·

**T**HERE are people who are economical with their money and lavish with their health. When old age comes, they live, maybe, in comfortable dwellings, but they are housed in sick bodies; they are, maybe, independent in means, but dependent on medicine and doctors; they are, maybe, provided with everything, but unable to enjoy anything.

· · ·

**H**EALTH is given us on the condition of our being temperate; if the condition is not adhered to, the gift is withdrawn.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**B**E particular about your food, to guard your health, not to please your palate.

..

**H**AVE great faith in nature and little faith in doctors.

..

**W**ITHOUT self-control life is exposed to the storms of the passions—and, like a light not screened from the wind, is too quickly consumed, or violently extinguished.

..

**B**Y repeated stumbling and falling we learn to walk through life.

..

**W**HAT have been the causes of religious persecution all through history? First: rapacity—which makes use of the name of religion to palliate its wickedness. It is so convenient to despoil with impunity, nay, with the applause of the people, simply by calling the despoiled heretics, and playing the part of an avenging angel. Secondly: fanaticism—which imagines God a despot who has once issued for all time certain decrees that are never to be altered and never to be examined, and which persecutes all those that think differently as rebels rising against God's government. Lastly: the paid priesthood—in whose interest it is

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to propagate their own confession by suppressing any other.

• • •

**I**F a man's understanding is not quite logical and his feelings are not quite pure, his religion will lack in logic and purity.

• • •

**A**S wisdom and virtue are the founders and supporters of religion, so are folly and wickedness the causes of its degeneracy.

• • •

**T**ITUS, the conqueror of Jerusalem, reënters imperial Rome with his victorious army. There he sits, proud and majestic, in his triumphal chariot: there they march, the invincible legions; there they carry, as trophies, the sacred vessels of Jehovah's Temple; there they lead the captive Jews. All the pride and joy is on the side of the Roman victors; all the humiliation and mourning on the side of the conquered Jews. Rome is resplendent, the mistress of the world; Jerusalem is desolate, levelled to the ground. But before the Romans had marched to Jerusalem to destroy Jehovah's Temple, the Jew Paul had gone to Rome and taught that doctrine which was to undermine and overthrow Rome's pagan fanes and erect on their sites temples consecrated to the God of Israel, the only God, the God of the universe. The eternal light of

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Jehovah's sanctuary had reached Rome ere the golden candlestick was brought there.

. . .

THE Greek garb in which the New Testament is clothed is so thin that the Hebrew form gleams through.

. . .

THE truly religious in all confessions, those who *aspire for the highest*, belong to the same party, and are the opponents of all the truly irreligious who, having their eyes, animal-like, turned toward the earth, have only earthly desires. The different denominations, however, like the different languages, confuse the ideas of men. Just as the difference of language is set up as a wall of separation, instead of the good of all nations considering themselves allies and the common adversaries of all the bad—so the difference of denomination is falsely looked upon as a line of division.

. . .

HUMAN folly has made of a few plain precepts of reason and conscience, which would suffice for the guidance of the individual, all the numberless theological dogmas and religious systems that bewilder and separate mankind; and human wickedness has made of a few plain natural rules, which would suffice to control a community or a state, all the innumerable, entangled laws that fill the different codes of a hundred nations.

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**F**OR two thousand years the Hebrews had kept the light of monotheism burning before other nations began lighting their lamps at it—and even then, the Gentiles, not being used to that dazzling light, could not yet bear it and had to compromise with polytheism: amplifying the unity, creating a host of saints and, contrary to the decalogue, making unto themselves likenesses and bowing themselves down to them. The Hebrews, however, have kept on burning the pure light of monotheism, and, as long as all the nations proclaim not yet, “The Lord our God is one Lord,” doing away entirely with man-adoration and image-worship, the Hebrews have a grand mission yet.

...

**W**HEN God had chosen the Jews for His particular people, foreseeing the untold sufferings they would have to undergo through this choice, He felt great pity for them—which increased His love for them still more. Love had been the cause of His choice, and His choice became a new source of love.

...

**W**HEN Abraham, the first Hebrew, instead of having his son marry a neighbor's daughter, sent for his brother's granddaughter living at a great distance to come and be his son's wife, the four thousand years' separation of his descendants from the rest of the world began, and the first seed was

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sown of their unparalleled glory and unexampled sufferings, both the sequence of this separation.

· · ·

**F**OUR thousand years the Jews have been a living miracle: one unmixed wave in the midst of the surging ocean of nations. To this miracle humanity owes the Bible and the Koran founded thereon—and who knows what we may owe to it yet in times to come?

· · ·

**J**UDAISM allows no amplification of the strict Unity, no man-adoration, no image-worship—and neither Jesus nor His disciples have in the least altered this essential spirit of Judaism, this chief characteristic distinguishing it from every form of idolatry. It was only by contact with paganism and as a concession to it that contrary doctrines appeared in Christianity.

· · ·

**P**OLYTHEISM, the belief in many gods differing in will and unequal in power, in a heaven of conflicting interests and perpetual strife, favors selfishness, inequality, dissension, and warfare among men. Monotheism, the belief in one all-powerful and all-merciful God, in a heaven of perfect harmony, implies the idea that man, to find favor in the eyes of God, must strive by goodness,

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peacefulness, and love to establish harmony on earth as well.

..

**W**ITHOUT light and warmth nothing living or growing could exist; light and warmth are then the creative and preservative forces. This conception was the origin of sun and fire worship.

..

**T**HE Christian religion may become universal; but not before being expurgated from all heathen ingredients, from the concessions it had to make to paganism so as to spread rapidly in the pagan world.

..

**T**HE Mohammedans look up to the tribe from whom Mohammed has sprung; the Christians look down upon the people from whom Christ has descended.

..

**F**ROM the most secluded people, the Hebrews, went forth the teaching of the brotherhood of all mankind.

..

**S**UFFERING has been productive of great results in the history of mankind. The law of Moses, ethically so far superior to that which he had found in Egypt, evolved mostly from the sufferings of the

## MEDITATIONS

children of Israel in that country—and the sentence often repeated, “For ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt,” may be considered as the germ and nucleus alike of Mosaic ethics. Christianity, bearing the standard of highest morals into the pagan world, grew out likewise of suffering. The Jews, writhing under foreign rule in their own country and certain of God sending a redeemer to His own people, looked forward to a Messiah, an “anointed,” a king of their own. After many false messiahs, who vainly imagined themselves capable of delivering their people from the yoke of the Romans, Jesus appeared who, transferring the idea of a redeemer from the Jewish and political field to the universal and ethical domain, gave the impulse to redeem the human race by uniting them all as brethren loving one another and loving their common Father in heaven, by making of every man a brother of his fellow-man and a son of God.

...

THE path of the noble-minded on earth is like the path of spring: it is marked with blessings.

...

THE mean, not finding any noble trait in themselves, look for something degrading in others. As they can never say to themselves, “I am better than my neighbor,” they try to discover that their neighbor is no better than they are.

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**T**HE noble-minded, impelled to defend every one who cannot defend himself, will always take up the cause of the absent.

...

**T**HE world is based on justice and graced by generosity.

...

**J**USTICE can lay claim to esteem; generosity to love.

...

**B**E just and generous to your wife, children, friends, dependents, to mankind in general. Justice and generosity form the solid foundation of happy married life, the good education of children, the acquisition and preservation of friendship, the possession of our dependents' attachment and our fellow-men's love.

...

**T**HE outward shell of ceremony covers protectingly many a noble fruit on the tree of religion. As, however, people in general only see with their bodily eye, they frequently know only the shell. They pay, therefore, no attention to the kernel when divested of its shell, and show veneration to the shell even when empty.

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**N**O religion need fear coming in contact with another. Truth cannot be shaken, and if aught falls to the ground by the contact, be sure it is but a withered leaf.

. . .

**A**S soon as we have recognized the truth that happiness is founded on virtue, the nature of our ideas about the hereafter ceases to influence the conduct of our life.

. . .

**I**T is natural that servile natures and oppressed nations should imagine God a despot whose decrees must be obeyed, but need not be understood — and thus separate fatally religion from reason.

. . .

**S**ECTARIAN fanaticism divides men into hostile camps prejudiced against and warring with one another. True, deep religious feeling unites all men as brethren who, taking different paths, are trying alike to come nearer to their common Father in heaven.

. . .

**F**IRST the religious idea is conceived, then it is symbolically represented in imagery and ceremony. In the course of time, however, the people lose sight of the idea; the image becomes an idol, and the ceremony a meaningless performance. Then the scoffers who have penetration enough to

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see the absurdity of idol-worship and inane rites, but neither head enough to know that a soul had once dwelt in the symbolical embodiment, nor heart enough to deal tenderly with the body from which the soul had departed—begin mocking at the symbol and lead many astray. Finally the noblest and wisest undertake to revive the idea among men and to breathe again into the symbol a living soul.

· · ·

USELESS ceremonies may overrun, like weeds, the field of religion, and have to be removed from time to time. It is the necessity of removing those weeds that gave rise at different periods in history to reformatations and new religions.

· · ·

AS others are often better judges of us than we are ourselves, so one religion frequently finds its best judges among the adherents of another—and thus the plurality of religions contributes to reciprocal enlightenment.

· · ·

EVERY intolerant religion is idolatry exacting human sacrifices.

· · ·

THE human victims offered by savages on the altars of their idols are few compared with those sacrificed by civilized nations in religious wars and persecutions.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**SLAMISM has been spread with fire and sword; but even the spreading of a religion through outwardly peaceful proselytism is attended with cruelty—for many a conversion is stained with the heart-blood and the tears of those related to the convert.

..

**T**HE kind, the charitable, the considerate, the patient, the compassionate, the forgiving—are the missionaries of the true religion of brotherly love, propagating it by example.

..

**S**WIFT-FOOTED Fancy and sweet-smiling Hope walked forth together into Future's wide domain, and all they saw was beautiful and glorious. On and on they rambled, when, all of a sudden, a yawning grave stopped their progress, and at its sight Hope paled and fainted. Fancy, bewildered, hesitated for a moment—then seizing her magic wand, she touched with it her dying companion, and lo! mortal Hope was transformed into immortal Faith. Fancy and Faith then passed over the grave into the infinite and eternal kingdom of heaven.

..

**S**ACRIFICES will always remain most essential in worship. To sacrifice part of our time, of our possessions to the benefit of others; to control our

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temper, overcome our vanity, check our pride as an offering to the feelings of others; to bridle our passions as an oblation to our own true welfare—is not that essentially how we serve God?

· · ·

**T**HERE are three dietary laws: Earn your bread honestly; eat it with moderation and a thankful heart; and give to the hungry from your superfluity.

· · ·

**T**RUTH is like the sun. If it declines in one part of the world, it comes up in another; if it sinks at one time, it rises at another; if it is hidden for a while, it is only by passing clouds.

· · ·

**F**ALSEHOOD entails insincerity, and insincerity bondage—for our soul is enslaved when we lose the liberty of being frank.

· · ·

**T**HE devil puts an untruth into a man's mouth and exacts a hundred more as interest—for the devil is the greatest usurer.

· · ·

**T**RUTH is the authority, not he who said it.

## MEDITATIONS

**I**N the course of time the same truth may be expressed in different ways by different men; but it is in the words which express it best that it becomes generally known and does its beneficial work—for every truth is, as it were, a soul, and he who gives it expression clothes it in a body, and the soul of a truth transmigrates from one body to another until it has found the fittest form.

. . .

**T**HE tiller of the ground is commonly no writer, and the pen is very rarely one of the instruments he cleverly handles—which is a pity and a wonder. It is a pity—for we should have faithful pictures of nature from the hand of him who most communes with her; and it is a wonder—for who could be more inspired to write than he who is daily surrounded by ever-varying and ever-beautiful nature?

. . .

**T**HE fancy of the poet alights on everything beautiful and extracts sweetness therefrom—as the bee does from the flowers.

. . .

**T**HE artist, a creator, breathes into his work the breath of life and it becomes a living soul.

. . .

**T**HE words of the wise are like gems of high price: he who is a judge is struck with their value; he who is not takes no notice of them.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**A**MONG common people the shrewd pass for wise, the wise for dreamers.

. . .

**T**HE mental vision of the masses is dim, and the crafty, to further their own interests, often prepare glasses for them which make the objects look larger or smaller, nearer or remoter, brighter or darker than they really are.

. . .

**T**HE present, which is our own, and the past, which at least has been our own, occupy our thoughts much less than the future, which may never be ours. We seldom look back or enjoy the mere consciousness of living. It is with vain fears and idle hopes, which have only to do with the uncertain future, that our mind is generally filled.

. . .

**H**APPY days that are past are like dear friends departed. They are gone; but their remembrance abides with us to cheer us still.

. . .

**T**HE mind implanted in the narrow space of the present, without sending forth roots into the past and future, is easily swayed by the storms of adversity and passion.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**O a great extent our future is decided by the life we lead at present, and our present was decided by the life we had led in the past.

. . .

**T**AKE the advice of the past, and show your love to the future by caring for it at present.

. . .

**O**H, the pathos of the past, the burial-ground of so much and so many dear to our heart, where part of our own life is forever entombed! And oh, the pathos of the future, where hope and faith are laying out those wonderful hanging gardens, that all-beautiful paradise floating in the air!

. . .

**T**HE night puts out the light of day, throws a dark veil over the earth, makes man rest from his work, and spreads quiet and stillness about him and within him. Having thus prepared him to listen and understand, she bids him look upward to the host of glittering worlds and, in hushed and impressive tones, she speaks to him: By day you have only seen a tiny part of the small earth in which you are rooted; now you have a glimpse of the infinite. By day your thoughts, like your vision, have been confined to objects near; now let your thoughts dwell on eternity, while your vision faces infinitude.

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**T**HE rocks are mute—yet if we become well acquainted with them they tell us the most remarkable experiences of a wonderfully long life. They are motionless—yet their history is full of records of many wanderings. They grow not—but their very sameness is imposing amid the perpetual changes around them.

∴

**S**PRING is the image of fresh merry childhood, of hope, resurrection, immortality; summer, of youth, passion, impetuous strength, and fervent aspiration; autumn, of ripe manhood, sedate cheerfulness, rewarded labor; winter, of old age, deep earnestness, transitoriness, death.

∴

**A** MAN without sense of the beautiful, without enthusiasm, without poetical imagination, and be he ever so virtuous and ever so learned, is like a tree in winter which, though sound and strong, is bare, dreary, lustreless, and colorless.

∴

**T**HE poet is godlike—for he creates.

∴

**T**HE heart of the poet is a beautiful region wherein perennial spring is reigning. It is an enchanted land of buds and blossoms, songs and exultation, color and radiancy.

## MEDITATIONS

**THREEFOLD** is our life when our activity allows not the fleeting present to pass without leaving a trace; when our memory can resuscitate the dead past, and our imagination call into life the future yet unborn.

. . .

**EVERY** thought, action, occupation, event; every age, season, and time of day; every clime and scene; every object made by the hand of God or man—admits of an association of ideas and thus has a poetical element.

. . .

**THE** philosopher and poet climbs the heights of his mind and views the universe; he dives into the depths of his heart and brings up pearls.

. . .

**WHATEVER** impresses us puts our mental atmosphere into vibration. The vibrating capacity of this atmosphere we call sensibility; the continuance of the vibration we call memory. Those of deep feeling and retentive memory not only hear the voices of the present more clearly, but they also hear more voices resound from the past—and the world's harmony is to them fuller and richer.

. . .

**IT** is difficult for the sensitive to be worldly-wise, to pass over in silence from practical motives their real sentiments, and to accommodate their

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sayings and doings to circumstances and people—for their feelings do not merely occupy a little corner in their breast where they can easily be hidden away; but they fill their whole being, are apparent in their faces, and apt to run over the border of their lips in words.

. . .

**A**LL created things readily bring tribute to the philosopher and poet, so that thought and fancy may ever find nourishment.

. . .

**G**OD manifests Himself in the blossom as in the fruit; in the beautiful as well as in the useful.

. . .

**T**HE autumn wind sweeps through the forest. It tears at the trees and shrieks: "I come to carry off your foliage." A young tree answers defiantly: "Take it! the next spring will bring it back to me." An elderly tree replies quietly: "Many a year you have brought me this sad news, but as often your gentler brother, the spring breeze, has whispered to me the glad tidings of the leaves' return. I will look hopefully forward to another spring." An old tree speaks softly: "My poor leaves, my own beloved children! how my heart aches for them, and how it grieves me to lose them! such beautiful, playful, chatty little folks! They have borne me company, have cheered me the whole summer. If it is God's will I shall have new leaves

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next spring; but nevermore shall I have *these* leaves again." A tree marked by the woodman's axe thinks resignedly: "I trust I shall fall together with my leaves before the autumn wind separates us."

..

**T**HE wooden cottage says to the trees around it: "You extend to me your cool shade, you fan me with fresh breezes, and yet your brethren had to give their lives that I might come into existence." "We resent not," answer the trees, "we avenge not, we stop not to reason; we simply do unhesitatingly all the little good we can."

..

**T**HE foolish admire not the beauties of nature, which to them are simply natural. All their capacity of admiration they reserve for the supernatural, in which they naturally believe.

..

**T**HE earth is but an ant-hill. The white, black, yellow, brown, and red races that, like ants of different colors, crawl on it, are very similar to those insects. They are ridiculously serious, over-busy, forever hoarding and fighting.

..

**C**LOSELY observing human nature in different conditions and climes we cannot but think with joy: How many virtues humanity retains under the

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most untoward conditions! and reflect with grief: How many vices man is a slave to under the most favorable circumstances!

. . .

**O**UR inclinations set our energies in motion, as the sloping bed makes the river flow—and, as the direction of the river indicates the way the bed is sloping, so the direction of our energies shows what our inclinations are.

. . .

**W**E are more inclined to emphasize individual and national characteristics than the qualities common to the whole human family—as if our thoughts, perversely, liked better to dwell on the distinctive marks which separate men than on those touches which make all mankind akin.

. . .

**M**ANY of nature's phenomena appear also in ourselves. Violent storms rage in us; black clouds and the gloom of night envelop our mind; icy cold contracts our heart; sunshine spreads light and warmth within us.

. . .

**A** WHOLE solar system comprising worlds, but moving without a will of its own, according to prescribed laws, is no greater wonder than man, guiding himself and encompassing the universe with his thoughts.

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**Y**OU say: Men are rather bad than good. Here are the scales; put all the good there is in humanity in one scale, and all the evil in another. Now take off from the scale of evil your own acrimonious disposition, and, you see, the scales are evenly balanced. Sweeten your disposition and put it in the scale of good, and you will find the good outweighs the evil.

. . .

**I** LOOK with awe at a blank sheet of paper. Something might be written on it that would influence thousands for the good; that would stimulate all humanity, perhaps, to a great deed; that would be reverently, enthusiastically repeated by all future generations; that would be immortal and render the writer immortal.

. . .

**E**VERY time I speak or act unwisely I am vexed at my folly, but rejoice at being aware of it. I then determine to be wiser in the future and I think with rapture: how beautiful life will be when marred by folly no more! Then all at once another folly, just committed, stares me in the face. Thus vexation and joy, good resolution, ecstasy, and disappointment follow one another in unbroken succession again and again.

. . .

**T**HE rule of priesthood is upheld by ignorance: the people submitting to it are too ignorant to comprehend that human beings, priests as well as

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laymen, can know but little of the ways of God, and that the little the priests do know is within their own reach as well. The rule of aristocracy is upheld by servility: the people submitting to it slavishly think that certain classes are destined to have dominion over the others, just as man is to have dominion over the animals.

. . .

**P**ERSECUTORS have to be strong; they need not be right.

. . .

**T**HE persecuted in the past may be the persecutors of the present; their cause is the same, but they had been weak, and now they are strong.

. . .

**T**HE persecutors have prejudices against the persecuted which they allege as an apology for their conduct; but the persecuted may have just as many and fully as justified prejudices against their persecutors.

. . .

**T**RUE benevolence comes down to want like the gentle dew, not like the boisterous rain.

. . .

**M**AMMON'S statues stand in all streets and his temples in all places. Before every statue an adoring crowd are kneeling in the dust, while every temple is thronged and resounding with the voices

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of ecstatic devotees. Mammon, the cold, empty, and heartless idol, his hand full of gold, is throwing it among the crowd who, eagerly snatching at it and wresting it from one another's hands, are so absorbed in this pursuit that they notice not the sweet light of day, nor the wondrous circling of the seasons, nor any of the flowers of pure joy springing up within their reach; they hear not the voices of nature, nor the pleading of their hearts, nor the urgent claims of their minds. Meanwhile life is passing—void of true happiness and unhallowed by noble emotions or high aspirations.

· · ·

**L**IKE boys rolling in the mud, scuffling to get the penny thrown in their midst, humanity lowers itself to the very dust in the inglorious fight for money, shrinking from nothing low and mean.

· · ·

**T**HE striving of the masses is to *have* more; the aspiration of the elect is to *be* more.

· · ·

**I**N the battle of life mistrust is the shield of the shrewd, cunning their sword, money their war-cry.

· · ·

**S**OME infidels in their talk of the Holy Scriptures are like foolish children who, with an air of superiority, give us to understand that they no

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more believe in fairy tales; they know now that all that is not true. The unimaginative, the unpoetical, the dry souls! They see not the eternal monuments of truth because of the tendrils of poetry that have, in the course of ages, twined around them.

...

**M**OTHER NATURE mourns over the perverseness of mankind, her children. There is room enough on her lap and nourishment enough in her breast for them all; but they insist on crowding together by the million, while leaving countless acres uncultivated and uninhabited—on having innumerable desires for unnecessary and harmful things and taking up a thousand artificial occupations to get the means of satisfying those desires, instead of applying for their few real wants immediately to her, their mother.

...

**D**ISCONTENT implies the supposition that we should be happier if we could take the shaping of our destiny from the hands of Providence into our own—which is a great mistake.

...

**A**NGER has a ridiculous side which is reflected in the smile often flitting over the faces of those who witness it.

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**V**ULGARITY is the jarring disharmony, the ludicrous incongruity arising from the glaring contrast between external display and internal emptiness, between the profusion of things that are bought and the scarcity of qualities that cannot be bought.

..

**T**HE gaping multitude, attracted by some insignificant thing, are themselves the attraction of the observer.

..

**T**HERE are religious tenets which all men agree in considering sacred: *there is a universal religion*. The school is right not to occupy itself with denominational doctrines; but it is entirely wrong not to introduce instead that religious instruction which teaches what is indisputably good and pure and true and right and noble.

..

**T**HE history of a people may be written and taught in such a way as to do more harm than good. If the history and the teacher expounding it declare that this people is better, wiser, braver, and more skillful than any other; that in all its international differences the right was invariably on its side; that in all its battles it was victorious, or ought to have been, or would have been if this or that incident had not interfered—the history and the

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teacher confirm conceit and prejudice and render the mind of the pupils illogical in all questions between themselves and others.

...

**T**HE knowledge we acquire is but raw material; what we make of it depends on our skill.

...

**L**ET "Right and Light" be our device. Let our life be a campaign against wrong and darkness; against the temptation of doing wrong; against our indifference to the wrong done in the world; against the darkness of ignorance; against the darkness in which falsehood, vice, and crime like to envelop themselves.

...

**W**HAT is truly agreeable is the result of what is truly useful. All that strengthens the body, enlightens the mind, and ennobles the heart is truly useful, and all the pleasures resulting from a vigorous constitution, a cultivated intellect, generous feelings, and noble deeds are truly agreeable.

...

**T**O reduce man's follies and vices—the principal sources of his misery—we must begin with the child. Humanity's evils would not grow so rank, if most of their germs were removed from young hearts in the parental house and at school.

## MEDITATIONS

**WITHHOLD** not due praise, but be chary of rebuke—for praise encourages virtue, while rebuke discourages effort.

. . .

**TO** wander through life, undaunted by all the obstacles that lie across our path, on and on to a noble aim—is the holiest pilgrimage.

. . .

**AS** the enjoyment of a dish depends on the way it is prepared, so does the enjoyment of life depend on what we make of it.

. . .

**KEEP** the spring of life in its original purity; embitter it not by vice, nor sweeten it artificially by luxury.

. . .

**LIFE'S** road behind us seems short, even though the fatigue in our limbs proves the great distance. Life's road before us seems long, although we may arrive at its end this very hour.

. . .

**PARADISE** was lost by not obeying God; it might be regained by complete obedience to the divine laws and complete subjection to the divine will.

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**G**OD, the essence of all power, grandeur and grace, is the only true majesty—and the nearer we come to Him, the higher our nobility.

· · ·

**G**OD is all-merciful; the devil is cruel and mocking. The surest signs of a noble heart are utter incapability of derision and being ever ready to pity. In whomsoever you see these two qualities you see the distinctive marks of true nobility: the nobility of the soul.

· · ·

**I**T is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. Let the rulers and nobles, often the descendants of oppressors, consider it and not be too proud of their lineage; let the common people, often the descendants of the oppressed, consider it and not feel humbled by their extraction.

· · ·

**B**E particularly careful not to offend the mean—for their evil passions are easily inflamed, and any offence, or what might be construed as such, will fire them with resentment ready to consume you.

· · ·

**H**OW pathetic, touching, heart-stirring are human life, human destiny, human endeavors, longings, devices! Look how the poor children of man try to soothe the thousand ills of life and the pangs

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of death; to extract joy from their wretched existence, to attach importance to its utter insignificance, and to make its short, thorny path to the grave lead to a paradise beyond! How they transmute their body, a hut of clay, into the temple of a soul; their blind gropings on the mole-hill, earth, into a particular concern of God, and the mole-hill itself into the centre of the infinite universe! How they make the very destroyer, Death, ferry them over to a blissful shore! With what ingenuity they connect their petty individuality with the immortal soul of the universe, the eternal principle of life! With what faith they grasp at heaven to save themselves from the wreck of perishable earth!

. . .

**PRIVILEGES**, even when not abused, are productive of harm. In a country, and be it otherwise most civilized, where there are privileged classes, the people's sense of right and wrong cannot but be weakened and their nature must become tinged with servility.

. . .

**WRONG**, when powerful, is not satisfied with suppressing right; it casts ridicule upon it. Thus it happens that right, even when might goes over to its side, has first to live down the ridicule that had been attached to it before it can fully prevail.

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**J**UST as true as "Woe to the vanquished!" is "Woe to the minority!" and for the same reason: for being the weaker side. Woe to the weak! for being wrong prevents not the powerful from ruling, nor does being right save the powerless from subjection. Right is yet far from being equivalent to might, and the kingdom of heaven is long in coming.

. . .

**M**IGHT, lawfully wedded to Right, is frequently faithless and in love with Wrong. Right is then deserted and helpless; while Wrong, the favorite, is in power.

. . .

**W**OMEN are worse and better than men. Following less the reasoning of the mind and more the impulses of the heart, they are often less just, but as often more generous and self-sacrificing than men.

. . .

**T**HE will of man cannot overcome that of woman; but, through love, his will may become hers.

. . .

**N**OT by the tense reins of reason but by the yielding ties of love, woman will be guided.

. . .

**W**OMEN treat us frequently not so well as we deserve; but more frequently much better than we deserve.

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**T**HAT we overlook certain vices in men which we condemn in women has been the cause of lowering men and elevating women. That we overlook certain follies in women which we ridicule in men has been the cause of lowering women and elevating men.

. . .

**F**OUR things impress us painfully: a child without cheerfulness, a man without energy, a hoary head without seriousness, and a woman without modesty.

. . .

**W**HO disparages women honors not his mother.

. . .

**H**AVE the right kind of pride which rejoices in giving, helping, supporting. Let your hands be busy, your mind active, the holy flame in your heart kept burning—so as to contribute to the world's wealth, wisdom, love. Let it be your glory to do more for humanity than merely your share. Murmur not if fate refuses you success, if men refuse you kindness—as the beggar grumbles when his outstretched hand remains empty. Ask nothing, expect nothing: work and give.

. . .

**I**N the short span of his life man recklessly wastes time, as if he had much to spare; to the thousand ills inherent in human existence he has the heart to

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add more by his foolish and wicked conduct; and with all his pitiful insignificance in the boundless universe he can discover a reason for conceit and haughtiness.

...

**T**HE doctor helps us to take care of our body, the lawyer to take care of our property, the minister to take care of our soul; but happy is he who, by temperance and work, by integrity and love of peace, by a pure heart and a noble life renders the help of the doctor, lawyer, and minister almost dispensable.

...

**A**S distance in space makes objects look smaller, so distance in time makes men look greater.

...

**B**Y perseverance even small minds can achieve great things. Many a tiny rivulet has made a way for itself through the solid rock.

...

**T**HE bearer of a great name has to pay a penalty, as if it were a luxury on which a tax is levied. Otherwise not particularly insignificant, his great name makes him appear uncommonly small—just as a building of no mean proportions is dwarfed into diminutive size by a colossus overtopping it. On the other hand, however, he may gather fruit from this incident—for it is apt to stimulate him

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to advance in virtue and knowledge and usefulness, and thus reduce to some extent the long distance separating him from his great namesake.

..

**T**HE fairest dream of our life is that all life is but a dream, from which we shall awake to real life.

..

**T**HE third part of our life we pass in deathlike sleep. It is the tribute we have to pay to our master, Death, in token of submission.

..

**E**VERY passing day is a herald proclaiming Death's approach; but none heeds—until his solemn majesty suddenly appears.

..

**H**OW scornful of death mankind engages in the battle of life! Generation after generation are swept away, and new hosts keep forever marching up undauntedly to fill the gaps! With music and song and flying banners they all rush to certain death! Different are their battle-cries, but the same unflinching courage inspires them all.

..

**W**HAT is most beautiful in life? A free hour—free from care, free from disease, free from dependence. It is only a short hour, for the clouds

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of care, dispersed for a while, will soon gather again; the functions of the body may at any time be disturbed; our independence from others, from circumstances and from our own frailties never continues long—but while this free hour lasts, it is beautiful, the most beautiful in life. Then the mind soars as high as it listeth, as if it could fly straight up to the sun and drink its fill at the very fountain of light. Then the heart is transported with heavenly joy—feeling purified from all the dross of earthly passions and earthly desires.

...

**A**LL that men demand from life—pleasure, honor, riches, power—they have to pay dearly for; mostly more than all that is worth.

...

**T**HERE are people who say in their hearts: “Our possessions will not follow us after death; but, through charity, we send them in advance to prepare for us a good reception.” How beautiful is this faith! and how fruitful in good deeds!

...

**W**OE to the tyrannical government that allows not the people to feel at home in their own country! Woe to the cruel parents that turn the heart of their children away from their own father’s house! Woe to the unhappy who forfeit the enjoyment of their own company!

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**A** PRESENT, and be it the least thing, becomes most precious if it expresses esteem, gratitude, attachment, friendship, or love: if it embodies a soul. When God had formed man of the dust of the ground, He breathed into him a soul, and common clay became the noblest thing on earth.

...

**W**E strengthen memory by exercising it.

...

**T**HE oak is precautionous: it clings to its old garment until it receives a new. The birch is vain: she arrays herself in white amid all her dark-robed sisters. The poplar is selfish: it turns all its branches toward itself, grudging every one its shade. The palm is bountiful and self-sacrificing: it places itself in the desert to offer the wayfarer a refuge from the fierce rays of the sun. The snowdrop is inquisitive: it thrusts its head out earliest to look for coming spring. The rose is beautiful and modest alike: she tries to hide by enveloping herself with manifold petals, and her beauty is only heightened thereby. The plainly attired, fragrant violet is of outward simplicity and inward worth. The gorgeous but scentless tulip is fond of finery and lacking in spirituality.

...

**A**S frost turns flowing water into inert ice, so does the icy breath of despotism check the course of human activity; and as genial warmth makes the

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ice-bound river flow, so does the sun of liberty set all the energies of the people in motion.

. . .

**I**N the bitter-sweet musings of the exile, his beloved, from whose arms he had been torn, appear to him as if transfigured, and their voices sound to his charmed ear like heavenly harmony. All their human defects and weaknesses seem to have departed, leaving them superhumanly perfect. His love to them is that love which God had first revealed to him in exile, cleansed from all earthly ingredients—and their love to him is so sublime that it combines angelic purity with divine forgiveness.

. . .

**H**ISTORY points out the steps of man's steady progress: the ever-increasing victories of mind over matter.

. . .

**L**OOK to your health in body and soul; strive for your independence from others and from your own passions; obey the dictates of your conscience, ennoble your heart, enrich your mind; widen more and more the sphere of your usefulness; give from your possessions, from your love, from your knowledge, from your wisdom, from your experience.

p

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ALL humanity may be divided in two principal parts: those that promote the world's welfare, prosperity, peace, and happiness—and those that check them; those that contribute to the world's harmony, and those that impair it.

. . .

THE lynchers, who institute themselves the body-guard of virtue, are as virtuous as the inquisitors, who instituted themselves the body-guard of religion, were religious.

. . .

HATE injustice; pardon the unjust.

. . .

IT is not the noblemen, but the *noble men*, that rank highest.

. . .

JESUS continued the holy work of the preceding prophets: to glorify love to God and man as the essence of the whole Law, and to declare ceremony as immaterial; to lay all stress on the doctrine of Moses: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—while treating the other Mosaical teachings either as contained in the above, or else as of secondary importance.

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**J**ESUS, like the prophets before Him, taught love and peace; severity to oneself, charitableness to others; hate of sin, pardon of sinners; relinquishing of earthly cares, trust in God; unremitting striving to lay up lasting treasures, indifference to perishable possessions. He inveighed against outward ceremony overgrowing inward religion; against hypocrisy, ostentatious piety, self-complacency, race-pride, covetousness, inordinate ambition—and, like some prophets before him, fell a victim to the blindness and wickedness of the people.

. . .

**T**HE sacred books of all religions contain the same material whereof a wise father makes use in instructing his children: truth clothed in poetry, morals in parables, the conception of God and the knowledge of man and nature in legends and miracles.

. . .

**I**N the company of the intellectual the current of our thoughts becomes mightier and swifter, the flight of our fancy easier and higher; our memory seems to gain in power and freshness, and the latent sparks of humor and wit are elicited from our mind. We feel enriched by the new ideas and sentiments we hear and by those we discover in ourselves

. . .

**I**N the company of the foolish our thoughts become stagnant and our speech loses its fluency. What stimulus to thought and speech can their conver-

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sation give us? What have we, what can we, or what do we desire to communicate to them? If we take up the thread of discourse, they break it by interruption or we drop it for their want of comprehension; and if they start a theme, we have no interest in it, feel no desire to take part in discussing it and, if we did, they would but seldom give us the opportunity.

..

**W**E change our views in the course of our life so much that we have to respect the opinions of others if we want to retain our self-respect.

..

**I**N times of political commotion the masses make all the noise; but it is the breath of a few thinking people that makes those hollow instruments resound.

..

**I**N moments when your beloved grieve you, become not impatient. Forget not what they are to you—and consider that even the sun, the source of all life, may sometimes vex us with its immoderate heat and dazzling rays.

..

**A**S the hardest substance is dissolved by heat, so may the hardest heart be softened by the warmth of love.

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THE sublimest creations of the mind have been inspired by love: by love to God, to mankind, or to a single human soul.

...

TO forgive is in the power of the will, but not to forget. Let us take, then, particular heed not to offend.

...

THE old, having been young themselves and having a reflective and observant habit of mind, ought to understand the young through memory, reflection, and observation. It is much harder for the young to understand the old.

...

WE laugh more heartily at the droll expression of a child than at the pretentious joke of a jester; a plain-told tale may touch us more than an elaborate tragedy and amuse us more than a diffuse comedy; the misery of the poor and the anguish of the sick move us all the more, the less the sufferer complains; we pray with more devotion when entering spontaneously the house of God than when we are called there at a stated time by the ringing of bells to take part in the general prayer. The more we let things speak for themselves, the greater effect they produce.

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IF the company wherein you find yourself are disposed to merriment, disturb them not by your seriousness; if they are disposed to tease you good-naturedly, disturb them not by your sensitiveness: be in harmony with the general tone.

. . .

CONVERSATION is not made less agreeable by difference of opinion; but it might be made so by the way the difference of opinion is expressed.

. . .

NO name is fine in itself; it is the *good* name that makes the *fine* name.

. . .

THE entrances and exits on life's stage are incessant; our joy at those that come and our tears for those that go, follow each other in rapid succession—and long before we leave the stage the scene becomes to us bewildering and heart-rending.

. . .

THE spark flies upward and expires—a true picture of human aspiration and the fleetness of human life.

. . .

WE are not here to stay. Like a drop hanging at the edge of a cup, we hover on the brink of this earth, until the fulness of years or a slight shock makes us fall.

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**E**ARTH is the creditor of us all; the debt we owe her is ourselves; and one day she will claim us. When? Where? Happy we that we know it not!

. . .

**S**UN and moon are the paymasters charged with paying us off our destined time of life. The sinking sun says to us: "I have paid you another day"; the reappearing crescent says to us: "I have paid you another month." Sun and moon circle so swiftly that the debt is soon discharged.

. . .

**A**T whatever age the good and wise die, their life has been long. At whatever age the good and wise die, their life has not been long enough.

. . .

**M**OST epitaphs tell us less what the dead were than what the living should be.

. . .

**S**OME events in our life we understand thoroughly for the first time when living them over in thought in after-years—as some passages in a profound book become clear to us by repetition.

. . .

**W**ITH the warmth of kindness in your heart and the light of cheerfulness on your face, you will journey pleasantly through life.

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LIFE'S bitter herbs you must eat alone; but invite your friends to partake of life's sweets.

· · ·

THE faithful lie down to die as tranquilly as to sleep, certain of reawakening; the wise lie down to die as tranquilly as to sleep, certain of being in the hand of the same Power in death as in life.

· · ·

SELFISHNESS, a fatal disease of the heart, is almost as incurable and as isolating as leprosy.

· · ·

OUR evil propensities recommend selfishness to us as our friend, and our credulous folly believes it. Thus selfishness is introduced into our hearts, and, under the mask of friendship, harms us all the more.

· · ·

SELFISHNESS is discernible even in the highest speculations of the human mind: so much thought is given to the *future* of the soul and so little to its *past*.

· · ·

MEN who do not rise above the common level may grow warm in their own cause, but not in that of humanity; in the discussion of a reality, but not of an idea—for selfishness is their atmosphere above which their life-blood congeals.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**FOUR** things provoke disgust: vulgar display, haughty mediocrity, boastful ignorance, and sanctimonious villainy.

...

**THE** powerful, high-soaring mind is, like the eagle, inclined to solitude—and it frequently *has* to be solitary, for very few can follow it in its flights.

...

**THE** hour of twilight, bordering alike on the parting day and the coming night, is most inviting to meditation on past and future.

...

**HE** who likes to commune with nature and sees the divine therein, likes also to commune with himself—for in his own heart he finds again the wonders of nature and the revelation of God.

...

**TO** most people nature's vast realm is rather devoid of interest; it is only that particle of it which, perchance, belongs to them that occupies their thoughts. To most people mankind in general is rather indifferent; it is only the few near and dear to them they concern themselves about. But alas! possessions, kindred, and friends we may lose—it is only when we love all nature and all humanity that our interest in life can never cease.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**A**VOID speaking of yourself: it is one of the most tempting and most harmful suggestions of vanity.

. . .

**I**F we hunt after fame, we never overtake it; if we attain merit, fame comes to meet us.

. . .

**D**ISPLAY not wisdom and learning in society; strive not to instruct where you are to entertain.

. . .

**R**EAL wisdom condemns not pleasure—for real pleasure is not in conflict with virtue.

. . .

**I**F humanity were as easily moved to compassion as to derision, much of the world's misery would find immediate relief.

. . .

**W**EALTH lives in a brilliantly lighted house; poverty in a dark hut. Wealth, therefore, sees not poverty and is seen by it too sharply.

. . .

**W**E owe much of our life's happiness to our faithful friends; we owe much of our worldly wisdom to faithless friends.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**N the literary market gems often sell at the price of beads and beads at the price of gems.

. . .

**E**ACH time of day, each season of the year, each period of life, has such particular, unexcelled charms that we could never decide which is the most beautiful.

. . .

**G**AIN-LOVING trade invents the fashion, change-loving vanity follows it, and gaping folly admires it.

. . .

**T**HE current of time, passing over all that men have brought to light from the mines of their intellect, gradually washes off all dross, leaving only pure gold.

. . .

**T**HE martyr proclaiming with his last breath the principle for which he gives his life; the ship loyally fighting for her country to the last, her flag still waving above the waters which are closing over her—what sight more touching!

. . .

**T**HE mean shun their benefactor. The consciousness that, had they been in his place, they would not have acted so nobly—makes them feel uncomfortable in his presence.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE haughty are most insufferable when condescending; the vulgar are most ludicrous when exhibiting their refinement; the mean are most contemptible when chuckling over their own shrewdness.

...

**T**HE high-minded wonder at the eager contest of the people for things exceedingly small. They are like one standing on a high mountain to whom the slight elevations in the landscape at his feet are scarcely perceptible.

...

**A**S rust marks the base metal, so does sordidness the ignoble nature.

...

**B**E not like water seeking the lowest level; be like the flame ever striving upward.

...

**W**E are all sentenced to death; the executioner's axe will infallibly fall on our neck—and what we call a long life is only an aggravation of the sentence: being condemned to witness first the execution of those dearest to our heart.

...

**T**HE living present will turn into the dead past. Abuse not the living present or you will be haunted in the future by the ghost of the dead past.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**H**OW short is life!—and yet how much suffering  
can be compressed within so little space!

...

**T**HE earth is furrowed with graves, and we live  
carelessly and cheerfully on it—like children  
playing on a tombstone.

...

**A**S long as we have wishes left, life is bearable;  
when the world appears to us so dreary and  
void that we see nothing desirable in it, then the  
worst has come.

...

**D**EATH is eternally besieging universal life and  
storming its defences; but life stops every  
breach as soon as death has made it.

...

**D**ESCEND into the depths of your own nature;  
explore those regions; find out all that is hidden  
there; remove thence whatever is hurtful, cultivate  
whatever is good. If you discover there a deep  
well, draw the living waters; if a mine, work it; if  
pearls, dive for them.

...

**T**HE services we can render to mankind are so  
various that there is for every one a particular  
sphere of useful work; we have only to find our  
place and fill it well.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**M**AN'S sublimest endeavor is to render his memory immortal, so to live as to perpetuate his name by benefiting humanity.

. . .

**N**EITHER difference in race nor in language nor in creed is a barrier between men. All the generous hearts and noble minds are natural allies and the opponents of all the mean, base, and wicked.

. . .

**T**HE highest culture and the lowest degradation are found in cities—for men become most polished and most brutalized *by men*.

. . .

**A**LAS that wisdom should prefer to come to us at an age when most temptations have left us! It solemnly presents us with a shield after the battle has been fought!

. . .

**I**GNORANCE is darkness and folly is blindness; knowledge is light and wisdom is sight.

. . .

**T**HE eye of the wise penetrates things; the foolish see no more than the surface of things; the vain and selfish only see themselves in all things. To the wise, things are transparent; to the foolish, a dark mass; to the vain and selfish, a kind of mirror.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**M**OST people have no opinions of their own—what they consider as such have been imparted to them by others and are liable to be changed by the influence of others. They keep account, indeed, of the money that passes through their hands and could tell how much of it is their own; but they keep no account of the ideas that pass through their heads and cannot tell which have originated there and which have been suggested to them by others.

...

**I**T may so happen that we have had a friend for years and had not known the depths of his nature until some unforeseen event suddenly revealed them to us, and we stand amazed at the revelation. We had never known how wonderfully deep the sea was on which we had been sailing so long until, by a mere chance, we sounded it.

...

**E**VERY day the cries of the suffering and the gasps of the dying reach our ear from the surging sea of humanity, but they affect us little—while the suffering or death of one we know and love overwhelms us with grief. Bountiful Providence that has disposed it so! It would wring our soul incessantly and beyond endurance if we had for all mankind the warmest feelings of which our heart is capable—and if we had them for none, life would be disconsolately and unbearably cold and desolate.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**N**EITHER Job's wife nor his friends understood him—the former's counsel and the latter's consolation prove it — and this caused, perhaps, his acutest suffering.

· · ·

**M**EMORY garners the fruit which study has reaped; economy husbands the means which industry has acquired; temperance preserves the health which God has given us. Without memory and economy study and industry would be of no avail, for the sea could not fill a leaky vessel; and without temperance health would not abide with us, for the strongest body could not long withstand the ravages of intemperance.

· · ·

**M**ENTAL products that have grown up in the chilly atmosphere of want and under the dark clouds of care usually have, like the plants of the frigid zone, something stunted, colorless, and scentless about them. Those that have ripened under the genial skies of happiness have the luxuriousness, glow, and fragrance of tropical plants.

· · ·

**I**T often happens that first we acquire and have not the prudence to hold fast to our acquisitions; then we lose and become prudent by experience, but have never occasion again for the exercise of our prudence.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**H**OW blissful that moment when we feel ourselves freed at last from the grasp of disease! when the mind, like a poor bird miraculously rescued from the claws of its captor, can fly aloft again; when the heart, that had been agonized or torpid, may thrill again with joy in life.

...

**A**S you see your image in the river, so you see in the river an image of all humanity and all life. Forever the river flows on, seemingly the same, but the water is ever changing; forever the current of humanity and of all life flows on, seemingly the same, but all the drops in the current are ever changing.

...

**W**HAT is life without health! A crumbling structure kept from falling by feeble props; a poor, crippled thing precariously supported by crutches. What is beauty without health! A shapely vase shattered and broken; a fruit pleasant to the sight and worm-eaten at the core.

...

**S**O-CALLED good living is often the cause of bad health.

...

**I** LOOK with interest tinged with sadness at the combat between the fair and the gray hair on my head, notwithstanding I know on whose side

## MEDITATIONS

the complete victory will ultimately be—for alas! the fallen in the fair army of youth are never replaced, while the forces of gray old age continually increase. When I first beheld a gray hair on my head a sharp pain shot through my heart—for well did I know that the gray-uniformed conqueror will be followed by innumerable comrades who will gradually annihilate all the fair representatives of golden youth.

...

**I** HAVE been young and now I am old. I have been young and I was tossed about on the sea of life by the storms of passion and ambition—and now I am old, and, the storms being hushed, I am approaching in a calm the other shore. I have been young, and inexorable nature, pressing me into her service, goaded me with earthly love, and the hot blood and inexperience of youth set on me fierce desires and hungry longings which pursued me without rest—and now I am old, enfranchised from serving nature's purposes and allowed to live for myself—and, knowing by experience the futility of most human pursuits, I am not agitated by vain ambition, nor robbed of that precious tranquillity of the mind which alone enables man to be fully conscious of the glory of living.

...

**I** LOVE the world—our dear, beautiful world. Nature enraptures me with her charms; my eye is forever resting with delight on her. Every

## M E D I T A T I O N S

morning with the reawakening of my senses reawakens also my love to her. She appears to me ever young and beautiful, clad in festal garments and smiling enchantingly. I cannot resist the fascinating influence she exerts upon me; I have repeatedly to declare her my love and to break forth into praises of her beauty. I never tire of observing her and ever discover new beauties in her. In whatever raiment she may choose to appear, whether in the white mantle of snow, in resplendent green, in plain autumnal brown, or adorned with gay and fragrant flowers—however her mood and whatever the expression of her face, whether she is quiet or storming, smiling or crying, beaming with joy or clouded with sadness, she is bewitching and irresistible. And the inhabitants of this earth, my brethren, how I cling to them with every fibre of mine! how I rejoice in everything that redounds to their honor or is conducive to their happiness! how many good, amiable, admirable, touching traits I find in their character! how grand is their history, their gradual evolution through the ages! how pathetic is their life! how self-sacrificing their love! what miracles does their mind work, what flights does their fancy take! what a variety of touching pictures offer the different stages of their life: tender, helpless childhood; blooming impetuous youth; resolute, energetic manhood; sedate, thoughtful old age!

. . .

**H**OW sweetly Nature expresses a promise! she brings forth a blossom.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**S**PRING often brings us rain and sunshine at the same time. Young spring, like a child, laughs and cries simultaneously.

. . .

**H**OW enviable are the trees! spring rejuvenates them again and again to their life's end.

. . .

**T**HERE at the horizon, where they meet, heaven and earth often hold converse. Their favorite theme is man, in whose breast they likewise meet.

. . .

**F**ANCY, entranced by the glory of the rising or setting sun, dreams a dream. It endows the sun with human feelings and imagines that, at arriving or parting, the sun is moved—and that it is this emotion which makes his face flush and glow.

. . .

**N**ATURE is so economical that she wastes nothing, but so fond of change that she allows nothing organic to remain quite the same for one single minute. She wants to keep everything forever and to change everything all the time.

. . .

**T**HE world is full of small people; great men are but thinly scattered over the earth. Grass-blades grow thick together; giant trees stand at rare intervals.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**NSIGNIFICANT men are like shallow cisterns: the few ideas and sentiments they have are stale and soon exhausted. Great men are like deep wells: their thoughts and feelings, fed from ever-flowing sources, are always fresh and inexhaustible.

..

**T**HE difference in size among animals is small when compared with the difference in intellect among men.

..

**T**RULY great men combine a cool head rising high above all prejudice and superstition with a warm heart wherein the tenderest feelings abide. They are like those gigantic mountains whose snow-crowned summits tower above mists and clouds, while their sunny slopes are clad with the most luxuriant vegetation.

..

**I**N literature, philosophy, science, art, there are a few central figures of first magnitude shining in their own light, like the sun; and a multitude of subordinate attendants who circle round them and receive light from them, like planets or satellites.

..

**T**ELL me your judgment of women, and I will tell you with what kind of women you associate.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**M**ISTRUST your power to convince your wife if you have only reason on your side; mistrust your power to gain her esteem if you have only justice on your side. You will have to call love to your aid in either case.

. . .

**P**RAISE your wife for her good qualities and they will increase; overlook her faults and they will diminish.

. . .

**W**ITH man love is, indeed, powerful; but with woman it is all-powerful. With man love is surrounded by equal forces that exert as great an influence upon him for good or evil; with woman love tolerates no equals, only subordinates. With man the inner government is representative in which love has a vote; with woman the inner government is absolute at the head of which stands autocratic love.

. . .

**E**VEN with the most virtuous woman vanity is so great that it pleases her not if a man is in regard to her as virtuous as herself. She would rather have him flatter her vanity and rebuke him in the name of virtue.

. . .

**T**RUTH hits the mark; falsehood rebounds and hits the marksman.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**S**ELFISHNESS and conceit beget prejudice, and prejudice blunts the edge of reason. Men rob, torture, and kill their brethren and find their actions fully justified, because those brethren are dissenters. They enslave their fellow-men and feel no compunction in doing so, because those fellow-men's skin differs in color from their own.

. . .

**W**ORTHLESS in themselves, men will glory in their noble birth, and, unable to discover anything else to their credit, the followers of a more powerful sect will pride themselves on not being the followers of one less powerful.

. . .

**I**GNORANCE is accompanied by lack of interest—for we are naturally indifferent to things we know not. The greater our knowledge, the more extensive is our sphere of interest and the less we are subject to listlessness and tediousness.

. . .

**T**HERE are people so insolent that they look at you in a way as if greatly astonished and highly amused at your existence in a world inhabited by such superior beings as themselves.

. . .

**I**F we always tell the truth we stamp our words with a mark that makes them current.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**RUTH is the sun round which the human mind is perpetually revolving and to which, in general, it is coming nearer and nearer; but it will never reach it—for the distance is as infinite as eternity itself.

...

**C**RUSH falsehood in the germ: one untruth produces many.

...

**I**F you have uttered an untruth, acknowledge it at once; remove without delay the poison that might infect your whole life. Better do the penance of self-accusation than lose innocence, self-respect, and the right to be sincere.

...

**I**N vain untruth fortifies itself with double and triple walls: the betrayer is within.

...

**I**NNOCENCE is attended with frank speaking, as good health is with easy breathing.

...

**H**APPY he who has nothing to hide, whose eye is the bright mirror of his heart, whose words are the frank expression of his thoughts!

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**W**ITH all the misery which is the common lot of humanity, in spite of sorrow and care, sickness and death that none can escape, humility is seldom man's companion through life—and he will proudly look down on his brother when he has a spark of intellect more which will soon be extinguished, a physical advantage more which will soon crumble into dust, a pretty bauble more which he will soon leave behind him.

...

**H**AUGHTINESS is the sign that hangs over the door of folly's abode.

...

**H**E who knows little readily laughs at him who knows less; he who knows enough to realize the infinitude of knowledge can never be proud of the little he has learned. The river, I dare say, passes haughtily the brooklets and rivulets until it comes within sight of the ocean.

...

**I**F people lay too great claims to the esteem of their fellow-men, even their just claims will find little acknowledgment.

...

**N**O one can overcome his evil inclinations without a hard struggle, nor end the struggle before the end of his life.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**T**HE resolute walk persistently toward their aim and in time reach it; the irresolute stray so often from the direct path that their life-time suffices not to bring them to their goal.

. . .

**Z**OOLOGICAL parks are a triumph of the human mind. Man, physically weak, but intellectually grown a giant of stupendous strength, gathers together from all parts of the earth wild animals, that had been in the first stages of his development his terror and scourge, and puts them behind iron bars before which little children may safely gaze at the monsters!

. . .

**N**OTHING impresses us so deeply with the amazing power of the human intellect as astronomy: that familiarity of man with the avenues of the heavens winding between the stars—and nothing makes humanity look so insignificant as astronomy: that science which reduces the planet, earth, man's whole world, to a small dark speck revolving in boundless space. When man made his greatest discovery, the infinitude of the universe, he discovered his own littleness; when his mind soared highest, his pride was brought down lowest.

. . .

**T**HE first buds, the first grass-blades, the first flowers appear—the year is born. All is growing, smiling; an indescribable air of freshness is

## M E D I T A T I O N S

on everything—the year is in its sweet childhood. The heat becomes intense, vegetation luxuriant; the thunder-storms rage—the year is in its passionate youth. The fruit ripens on the trees; the cornfield is waving with its golden harvest; the heat subsides; the thunder-storms abate; a gentle quiet replaces the impetuous rush and hurry—the year is in its ripe, sedate manhood. The days decrease, the cold increases; snow, the white shroud, covers the dead earth; the song of birds is hushed; the bare trees look like skeletons—the year is in its hoary old age.

. . .

**N**OT an atom in nature can ever be lost; it can only change. Individualities perish; but the same amount of substance exists forever. In this sense, the body, being matter, is immortal; the soul, representing individuality, is mortal.

. . .

**T**HE plants hang out their flower-signs: “Here are sweets.” The bees come and drink their fill, paying their reckoning by carrying a wing-load of pollen from one plant to another.

. . .

**A**S we are physically bounded by the atmosphere, so we are intellectually circumscribed by limits above which we cannot rise. Some metaphysicians, however, disregarding this boundary line, dare rise higher. Then their fainting mind, like one in a

## M E D I T A T I O N S

trance, sees visions, and these visions they take to be the result of highest thinking.

..

**T**HE speaker, the writer, must know what to leave unspoken, unwritten. What is thus left out is as important in speaking and writing as the pause in music.

..

**W**ITH every new language we acquire our mind becomes less narrow, less hedged in by national prejudices.

..

**W**E inherit the whole treasure of knowledge accumulated by all the generations that have lived before us. We are all heirs to untold riches.

..

**F**OLLOW not blindly the opinions of others; try to find out yourself what is right or wrong, true or false. Go to wisdom's own school and acknowledge no authorities.

..

**V**IRTUE is the health; wisdom is the beauty of the soul.

..

**A**S long as folly admires bright rags, vanity will put them on.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**I**N the crowd of the blind adorers of fashion we find the mob of the rich and poor alike.

. . .

**F**ASHION equalizes; good taste distinguishes. Fashion is for the blind masses who can only follow; good taste is for the few who are endowed with a sense of beauty. Fashion is a despot: it need not explain its decrees, but demands implicit obedience; good taste submits well-founded projects for approval.

. . .

**I**N vanity's blind worship of beauty she will even sacrifice health on the altar of her idol by doing violence to nature: by trying artificially to correct nature's imperfections and supplement nature's deficiencies.

. . .

**F**REE yourself from the idolatry of fashion, from worshipping that Moloch in whose consuming arms people put with fanatic ecstasy their means, their time, sometimes even their peace of mind, their honesty, their good name.

. . .

**V**ANITY is robed in tinsel. She holds a looking-glass in her hand. Over her face pass alternately a self-complacent smile and a haughty expression. She likes to talk, and preferably of

## M E D I T A T I O N S

herself. She is silly, ignorant, and flattery can do with her whatever it pleases. She is all for outward show and is empty within. She likes a crowd and cannot bear solitude. She longs to shine, to be admired, to create sensation, to reap applause; but the joys of self-respect, of inward life, inward peace, inward happiness; the love of independence, of frugality and simplicity are foreign to her. She delights in everything new, extraordinary; in variety and the variable; but is insensible to eternal nature and eternal truth.

. . .

**L**OVE of finery is a confession of one's own worthlessness, an open declaration of being on a level with the animals that are valued according to their furs and feathers.

. . .

**T**HERE are natures endowed with all the inward gifts that render them capable of understanding and feeling the grandeur and beauty of the world; but adverse circumstances, like the cherubim with the flaming sword before the gates of Eden, allow them not to enjoy this grandeur and beauty. Paradise beckons; the guards are inexorable; the soul is consumed with longing.

. . .

**V**ENERATE what is venerable; worship no false gods. Revere freedom, independence, truthfulness, manliness; do not sacrifice them on the

## M E D I T A T I O N S

altars of the idols: avarice, inordinate ambition, vanity, dissipation.

· · ·

**T**HE best teachings planted in our heart will not take firm root before our understanding can grasp them, nor bear fruit before our experience confirms them.

· · ·

**I**F we live so as to satisfy our own conscience, we will be satisfied with most people and most conditions.

· · ·

**T**HE passions, disease, want, and dependence are the principal obstructions on the road to happiness.

· · ·

**M**OST authors write books, as tailors make clothes, in accordance with the prevailing fashion. Their writings may now be generally read; but, like the clothes now generally worn, will soon be out of fashion and cast away. The few authors that write for all times may now be read only by the few that are capable of appreciating them; but they will be read with admiration and delight by the thinking and feeling of all ages to come, and their names will be fondly and reverently handed down from generation to generation.

## M E D I T A T I O N S

**A**N impure book often finds a multitude of readers. It is the corrupt therein that attracts the insect-like swarm of lower natures.

. . .

**H**ISTORY begins after man's dominion had become firmly established on earth. Like the history of a king, the history of man begins with his accession to the throne.

. . .

**H**IS kingly power and kingly right over all other living beings man derived from his intellectuality, and all his history, dating from the time his reign began, is the relation of his intellectual development.

. . .

**I**F people would be as saving of their time as of their money, their utilized leisure minutes would, in the aggregate, make up an astounding mental capital—as their small savings, collectively, amount to millions.

. . .

**T**HE least time is lost to the thinking mind—for thinking fills up any gap in activity.

. . .

**T**HINKING, or communing with ourselves, speaking, or communing with others, and working, or being useful to ourselves and others—

## M E D I T A T I O N S

fill up time. If we have not learned to think, find no pleasure in conversation, or, worse than either, like not to work—our time is full of gaps, where tediousness, melancholy, discomfort, and disease, those horrible monsters, like to lurk.

. . .

**T**HE present, hemmed in between the dead past and the dark future, would be ineffably dreary if unaided by memory and imagination; by memory which brings life into the dead past, and by imagination which brings light into the dark future.

. . .

**O**UR thoughts, fluttering in the field of the past, are attracted by the pleasant hours they discover here and there, as butterflies are by blossoms. Alighting for a little while, they revel in the sweet memories those hours contain.

. . .

**T**HE same world appears different to every individual: mirrored in human hearts it has in each a different reflection.

. . .

**I**F God implants in our hearts love of nature and of humanity, He gives us all the world to enjoy, to be interested in, to feed our thoughts on, to

## MEDITATIONS

extend our sympathies to. We can never feel entirely lonely as long as humanity breathes, nor entirely homeless as long as nature surrounds us, while our interest in life can never flag—for we feel the world's pulse throb through our own veins, the universe being as much a part of our own life as we are of universal life.

∴

**N**ATURE, intent on perpetuating the species, creates earthly love; human nature, bent on going beyond the limits of the animal kingdom and approaching the kingdom of heaven, idealizes love and elevates it to a feeling most holy and divine. Nature lays down the law of eating and drinking for all living beings; human nature idealizes animal feeding by expressing thankfulness to heaven whence comes all life and the sustenance thereof.

∴

**T**O find pleasure in excess and mischief, in harming himself and hurting others, lowers man beneath the level of animals.

∴

**O** HAPPY youth, happy school-days! when we grow every day in body and mind; when the future lies so bright and hopeful before us; when our parents shield us from care, and our teachers

## M E D I T A T I O N S

make the path of knowledge smooth; when love is waiting for us at home and instruction at school.

...

**P**ARENTS often wonder why their children are not good, and they themselves are the cause. People in need often wonder why their friends help them not, and they themselves are the cause. As well might the earth, while standing between the sun and moon, wonder why the moon is not in full lustre.

...

**G**REAT minds are at a disadvantage in general society. They are in the awkward position of one who wants to buy trifles and has only notes of great value about him. Stored with gold bars and gems, they are not supplied with the small change of current talk.

...

**T**RUE politeness induces us to step out of the narrow circle of egotism, which confines us to thinking of ourselves, and enter into the thoughts and feelings of others. It distributes reward of merit by showing appreciation in a manner most agreeable and most acceptable, and stimulates those to whom it is addressed to render true what is said in politeness. It interlaces prosaic conversation with flowers of poetry and ennobles every-day intercourse.

## MEDITATIONS

**A**DMIRATION of the excellent and the beautiful inborn in higher natures is supplanted with the masses by common curiosity which gazes with just as much interest at defects, deformity, misery, and degradation.















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